Business sector to promote artificial family planning

Story on PAGE A4

No quorum in House? Fiesta time for solons

FEEL KO LANG MAG-PA BEAUTY!
PWEDE!!

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—So what if the title can be read as a pointed reference to her days as the dictator's eldest daughter? Ilocos

NO QUORUM/ A17

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WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Nets sweep Pistons** SPORTS /A29
- **20 soldiers raid youth summer camp** ACROSS /A14
- **Investor sentiment in RP turns bullish** BUSINESS /B1

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80 7

MILF bomb expert, Egyptian arrested in Cagayan de Oro

By Grace C. Albasin
PDI Mindanao Bureau
and Martin P. Marfil
in Manila

THE BANDAGED face gave him away.

A bomb expert of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front believed to be behind the Dec. 30, 2000 bombings in Metro Manila that left 22 people dead was caught yesterday at the Cagayan de Oro City Airport, according to the military.

Alex Soriano, alias Muklis Yunos, was arrested along with an Egyptian Islamic missionary while about to board a Philippine Airlines plane bound for Manila. The Egyptian was identified as Dia'a Algabri.

"That is confirmed. A man believed to be Muklis Yunos was arrested," said Lt. Col. Renoir Pascua, spokesperson of the military Southern Command.

Yunos, a Maguindanaon, had covered his face with bandages to disguise himself, according to Pascua.

The arrest came a week after President Macapagal-Arroyo, who is scheduled to visit Cagayan de Oro today, ordered a massive military offensive against the MILF, which she blamed for a series of attacks and bombings in Mindanao since March.

Intelligence officials believe Yunos is the head of the MILF's Special Operations Group that was behind the series of bombings in Mindanao and in Manila in recent years.

Yunos, allegedly one of the conduits of the regional Islamic militant group Jemaah Islamiah in Mindanao, was also believed to be behind the bombing of a bus on Edsa in Balintawak, Quezon City on Oct. 18, 2002 that killed two people and wounded 20 others.

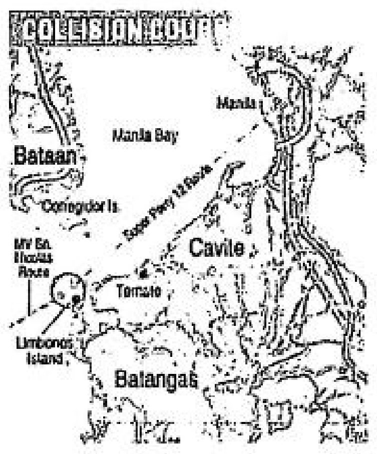
MILF/ A18

28 dead, 44 missing in sea collision

Launch sinks after hitting ship

By Philip C. Tubeza, Martin P. Marfil and Luige del Puerto *in Manila* **and Connie E. Fernandez,** *PDI Visayas Bureau*

IN BAD WEATHER, 28 people, including a boy, were killed when a wooden-hulled passenger launch from Palawan collided with a steel-hulled passenger ship bound for Cebu at the mouth of Manila Bay at 11:11 a.m. yesterday.



The fatalities were all passengers of the MV San Nicolas, which sank after it collided with WG&A shipping lines' Super Ferry 12 about one nautical mile northwest of Limbones Island, off Cavite and not far from Corregidor Island.

The last known collision at the mouth of the Manila Bay was on Dec. 2, 1998, when the MV Cebu City struck the MV Kota Suria, resulting in the death of 73 people. Forty-one people were declared missing then.

As of 8 p.m., 28 fatalities were reported and 203 passengers and crew of the wooden boat were rescued, Commander Geronimo Malabanan, information officer of the Philippine Navy, said.

Lt. Armando Balilo, Coast Guard spokesperson, said 44 others were unaccounted for as of 6:30 p.m.

The death toll was expected to rise because of the number of the missing.

The Coast Guard continued its frantic search for survivors after sundown after it was discovered that there were more passengers than was indicated in the San Nicolas' passenger manifest. Balilo said 168 passengers and 28 crew members were on the list.

This does not necessarily mean that the vessel was overloaded as it had a capacity of 268 people, according to Balilo.

He said the initial report showed that the San Nicolas hit the Super Ferry 12's "port quarter," the left side near the rear.

"We were hit but we had no damage and no one was hurt among our crew and passengers," said Gina Virtusio, WG&A information officer. She said all 1,506 passengers and 184 crew members of Super Ferry 12 were safe.

But Lemuel Pabula, San Nicolas Lines general manager, said over the radio that one of its boat passengers sent a text message to a relative in Manila that it was the Super Ferry 12 that hit them. The passenger allegedly sent the message at around 10 a.m. to the relative, who later called up San Nicolas Lines.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, together with National Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, arrived at Coast Guard headquarters about 9:30 p.m. to see the situation for herself.

The President was angry as she ordered an immediate investigation into the sea mishap.

"Definitely there will be an inquiry and it should all be finished in one week," the President said, adding that "heads will roll."

Ms Macapagal also tried to console a disconsolate mother who learned she had lost her 3-year-old daughter to the sea.

The President was furious when she learned that the MV San Nicolas had 36 passengers not listed on its manifest.

"The number of people killed would have been lower," she said,

28 DEAD/ A18

AMID a downpour, rescuers carry a passenger of the MV San Nicolas to the headquarters of the Philippine Coast Guard behind the Manila Hotel.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Tiglao says only 3,500 evacuees

By Dona Pazzibugan and Norman Bordadora

ONLY 3,500 civilians, and not 318,000 as claimed by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., were displaced by the latest military offensives in parts of Mindanao, a top Malacañang official said yesterday.

Presidential Chief of Staff Rigoberto Tiglao said the opposition senator might have confused his figures with that of the total

TIGLAO/ A18

GMA back with hopes for AFP modernization

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo arrived well past midnight yesterday from her official state visit to the United States, having raised the hopes of the overstretched Armed Forces that she had opened a lifeline to much-needed new equipment and weaponry.

Pledges of increased military assistance were the focus of Ms Macapagal's meeting with US President George W. Bush last week, as the two leaders reiterated their mutual support for the war against terror.

"This will be welcome assistance. If we have to modernize the Armed Forces using local funds, we will not be able to modernize it at all," said Rep. Prospero Pichay, head of the House armed forces committee.

The military has at present only 18 helicopters, two OV-10 attack planes, six MG-520 helicopter gunships and two C-130 transport planes, Pichay said.

In the 1970s, when the US military still maintained major bases in the Philippines, generous US aid poured in, allowing the AFP to maintain almost 100 helicopters, 12 C-130 planes and a fleet of F-5 fighter jets, he re-

GMA BACK/ A20

Play time too brief for kids, lost dolphin

By Lullie A. Micabalo
PDI Mindanao Bureau

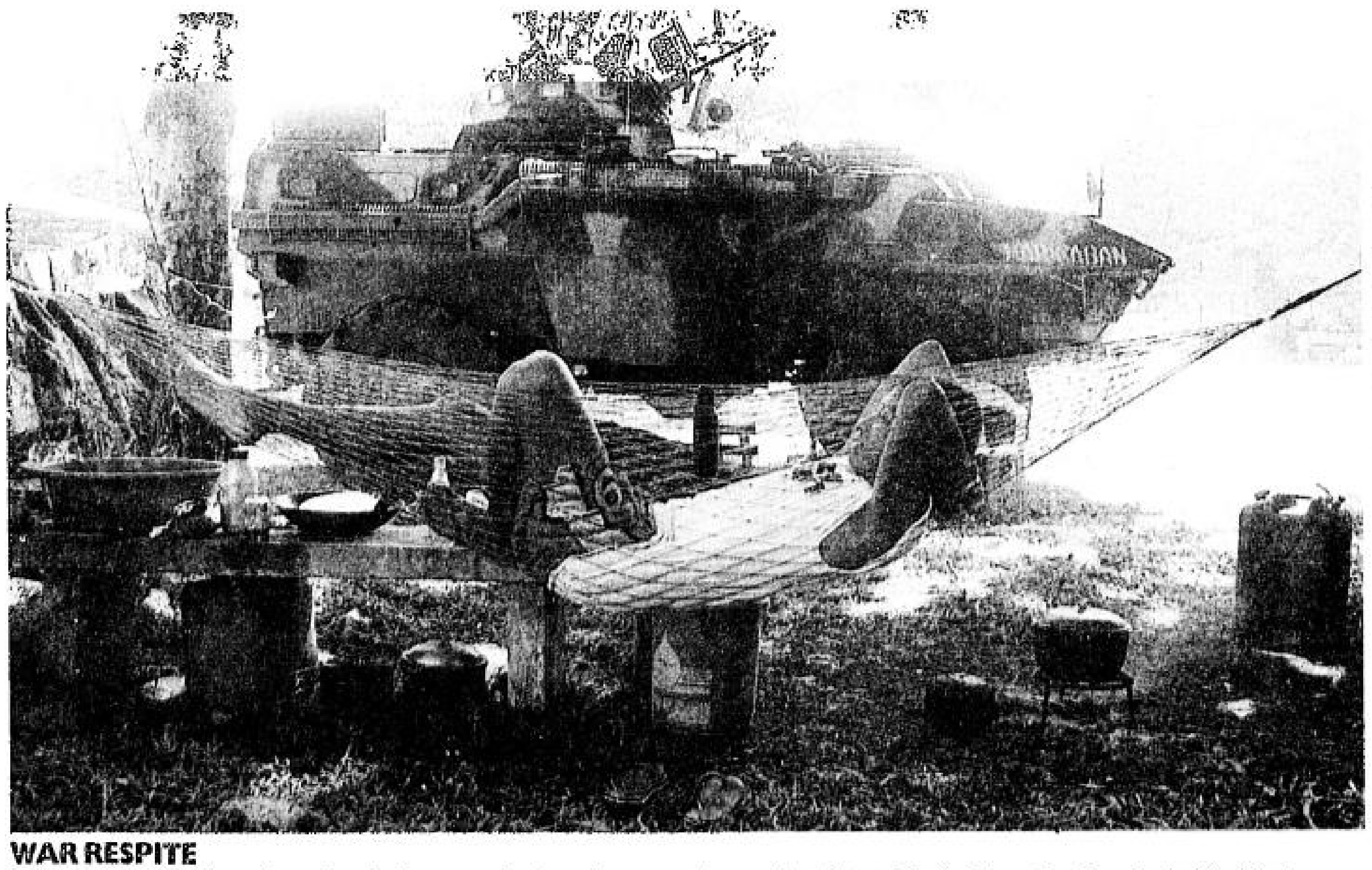
DIPOLOG CITY—The children found it playful and very friendly. So when personnel from the city agriculturist's office returned to the wild a 70-kilo dolphin (*lumod* in the vernacular) which had been stranded near the shore of Barangay Galas on Thursday afternoon, the children were crestfallen.

But the memory of the sea mammal will forever be etched in their minds.

"Six children, aged 8 to 12, took turns riding on the back of the dolphin. They chased it; in turn the dolphin chased them," said Myra Descallar, a fish warden who witnessed the event.

Descaller said she and the CAO personnel did not want to cut short the merriment but that it

PLAY / A19



WAR RESPITE

A government soldier takes a break after a week of combat operations against Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels in Pantao-Ragat, Munai, Lanao del Norte.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Back to reality of politics in RP

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

WHEN President Macapagal-Arroyo landed on Philippine soil at 1:57 a.m. on Sunday after a triumphant visit to the United States, it was a shock reentry into the reality of Filipino politics.

The first encounter will be the conflict in Mindanao, where she plans to spend a few days to inspect developments on the stepped-up military action against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and to put focus on Mindanao as the priority target for the funneling of military and economic aid she has received from the Bush administration.

The focus on Mindanao is an upshot of the understanding between Ms Macapagal and President George W. Bush that the restoration of peace and economic reconstruction on the island are key to strengthening the Philippine flank in the war on terrorism and to provide muscle for the revival of effective government in this country.

BACK/ A20

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A3

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The western sections of Luzon and Visayas will experience monsoon rains. The rest of Luzon and Visayas will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/05/28/03

Second FRONT PAGE

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Metro Manila	Monsoon Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Monsoon Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Sulu Balikatan on track—Abaya

By Vincent Cabreza,
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—A joint training exercise with United States Special Forces for the purpose of finally eliminating the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group is scheduled to start in Sulu by the end of June, Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Narciso Abaya said here on Saturday.

Abaya said President Macapagal-Arroyo's state visit to the United States has not altered the logistical preparations for the training exercise, dubbed Balikatan 03-1.

Neither did the recent terrorist attacks by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front influence the plans for the program, which will target only the Abu Sayyaf, which so far is the only Muslim-led armed group classified as a terrorist organization, Abaya said.

Despite US pledges and pronouncements about supplementing Armed Forces efforts against Filipino terrorists during Ms Macapagal's state visit last week, Abaya insisted the military will not be needing the help of US forces in its operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu.

Abaya explained that what the US and the Philippine governments want is to replicate the results of last year's Balikatan 02-1 exercises in Basilan, and spread its effects to the entire Sulu archipelago, including parts of Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, "to once and for all address the Abu Sayyaf problem."

Abaya was the guest of honor at the Philippine Military Academy on Saturday during the formal welcome for 277 incoming cadets of PMA Class 2007.

Abaya said the Balikatan 03-1 exercise was the logical consequence of Balikatan 02-1 in Basilan, "which was largely responsible for the continuous degrading of the arms capability of the Abu Sayyaf, as well as the rescue of four hostages in the jungles of Basilan."

Abaya, who headed the military's Southern Command before being named AFP chief last month, said the new Balikatan simply continues the beneficial provisions of the Basilan war exercise "to enhance the AFP's capability in combating terrorism, and when we say terrorism, we are referring to the Abu Sayyaf because they are regarded by the US as terrorists."

He said the terms of reference for Balikatan 03-1 are expected to be finalized by the Department of Foreign Affairs and US defense officials before the end of June or in the first week of July.

Abaya said the military was continuing to pursue the suspects in the armed attacks on Siocon in Zamboanga del Norte early this month and on Maigo, Lanao del Norte last April.

"Our punitive actions are concentrated in two areas. In the case of the Siocon perpetrators, they retreated to the Sipakid complex at the boundary of Siocon and Sirawai. The Maigo, attackers retreated to Munai and the boundary of Lanao del Sur," he said.

Abaya said the military campaign against the MILF was being conducted in the middle of a tactical alliance between the Moro secessionist group and the communist New People's Army in Mindanao.

But he said the alliance has not reached the stage where both underground forces would combine and attack government troops.

ABAYA

New law will jail hookers' customers

BUYING or engaging the services of a prostitute could land you in jail.

This is one of the highlights of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 which will be signed into law today by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

According to Senate President Franklin Drilon, the new law prohibits the trafficking of persons, especially women and children, for purposes of prostitution, pornography, sexual exploitation, forced labor and slavery, among others.

Another distinctive feature of the new measure is that prostitutes who are trafficked will no longer be penalized.

Drilon said this had been a major amendment to the Revised Penal Code, which he noted had been written in the 1930s under a "male chauvinistic society."

The maximum penalty for one who engages the services of a prostitute is a fine of P100,000 and a one-year jail sentence. For first-time offenders, the penalty is community service for six months.

Traffickers face a maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment. If the offense is committed against a child, the penalty is life imprisonment.
Christine O. Avendaño

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Second FRONT PAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The western sections of Luzon and Visayas will experience monsoon rains. The rest of Luzon and Visayas will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/05/28/03

Metro Manila	Monsoon Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Monsoon Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Sulu Balikatan on track—Abaya

By Vincent Cabreza,
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—A joint training exercise with United States Special Forces for the purpose of finally eliminating the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group is scheduled to start in Sulu by the end of June, Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Narciso Abaya said here on Saturday.

Abaya said President Macapagal-Arroyo's state visit to the United States has not altered the logistical preparations for the training exercise, dubbed Balikatan 03-1.

Neither did the recent terrorist attacks by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front influence the plans for the program, which will target only the Abu Sayyaf, which so far is the only Muslim-led armed group classified as a terrorist organization, Abaya said.

Despite US pledges and pronouncements about supplementing Armed Forces efforts against Filipino terrorists during Ms Macapagal's state visit last week, Abaya insisted the military will not be needing the help of US forces in its operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu.

Abaya explained that what the US and the Philippine governments want is to replicate the results of last year's Balikatan 02-1 exercises in Basilan, and spread its effects to the entire Sulu archipelago, including parts of Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, "to once and for all address the Abu Sayyaf problem."

Abaya was the guest of honor at the Philippine Military Academy on Saturday during the formal welcome for 277 incoming cadets of PMA Class 2007.

Abaya said the Balikatan 03-1 exercise was the logical consequence of Balikatan 02-1 in Basilan, "which was largely responsible for the continuous degrading of the arms capability of the Abu Sayyaf, as well as the rescue of four hostages in the jungles of Basilan."

Abaya, who headed the military's Southern Command before being named AFP chief last month, said the new Balikatan simply continues the beneficial provisions of the Basilan war exercise "to enhance the AFP's capability in combating terrorism, and when we say terrorism, we are referring to the Abu Sayyaf because they are regarded by the US as terrorists."

He said the terms of reference for Balikatan 03-1 are expected to be finalized by the Department of Foreign Affairs and US defense officials before the end of June or in the first week of July.

Abaya said the military was continuing to pursue the suspects in the armed attacks on Siocon in Zamboanga del Norte early this month and on Maigo, Lanao del Norte last April.

ABAYA

"Our punitive actions are concentrated in two areas. In the case of the Siocon perpetrators, they retreated to the Sipakid complex at the boundary of Siocon and Sirawai. The Maigo. attackers retreated to Munai and the boundary of Lanao del Sur," he said.

Abaya said the military campaign against the MILF was being conducted in the middle of a tactical alliance between the Moro secessionist group and the communist New People's Army in Mindanao.

But he said the alliance has not reached the stage where both underground forces would combine and attack government troops.

New law will jail hookers' customers

BUYING or engaging the services of a prostitute could land you in jail.

This is one of the highlights of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 which will be signed into law today by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

According to Senate President Franklin Drilon, the new law prohibits the trafficking of persons, especially women and children, for purposes of prostitution, pornography, sexual exploitation, forced labor and slavery, among others.

Another distinctive feature of the new measure is that prostitutes who are trafficked will no longer be penalized.

Drilon said this had been a major amendment to the Revised Penal Code, which he noted had been written in the 1930s under a "male chauvinistic society."

The maximum penalty for one who engages the services of a prostitute is a fine of P100,000 and a one-year jail sentence. For first-time offenders, the penalty is community service for six months.

Traffickers face a maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment. If the offense is committed against a child, the penalty is life imprisonment. *Christine O. Avendaño*

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OSAKA	230	365	JEDDAH	383	706
FUKUOKA	290	440	ABU DHABI	323	700
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It's official–the rainy season is here

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE RAINY season has officially begun.

A heavy downpour over Metro Manila and much of western Luzon early yesterday signaled the start of the wet season, according to the weather bureau.

"We can expect the rains to continue in the coming days but there would be breaks," said Winnie Gatab, weather specialist at the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration's (Pagasa) forecasting section.

Yesterday's rains were caused by an active low pressure area estimated at 240 kilometers west northwest of Zambales and the southwest monsoon prevailing over much of Luzon and the Visayas.

The low pressure area could develop into a tropical depression, with winds of up to 55 kilometers per hour, Gatab said.

According to the Pagasa forecast, the western sections of Luzon and the Visayas will experience monsoon rains while the rest of the country will be mostly cloudy with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms.

Metro Manila will also continue to experience monsoon rains, with moderate to occasionally strong winds blowing from the southwest. Manila Bay will be moderate to occasionally rough.

Pagasa's climatology and agro-meteorology branch (CAB) said it had expected the rainy season to set in in the second half of May.

The rainy season usually starts in June and lasts until November. The period from April to June signals the start of the southwest monsoon in the country with the wind system shifting from the northeast to the southwest, according to the CAB.

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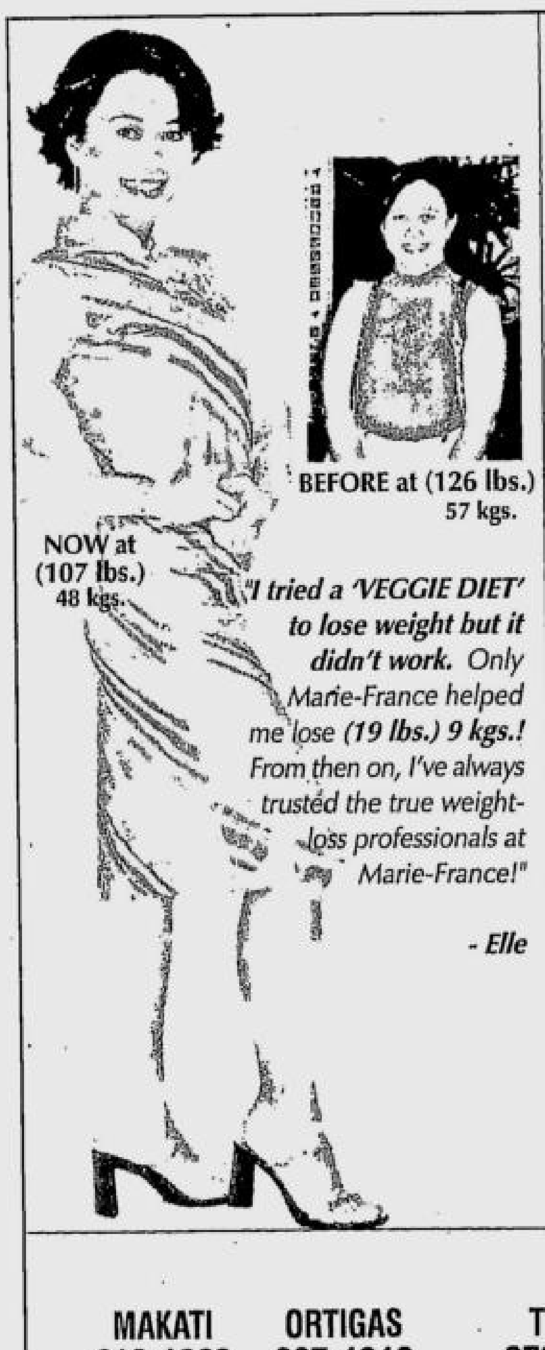

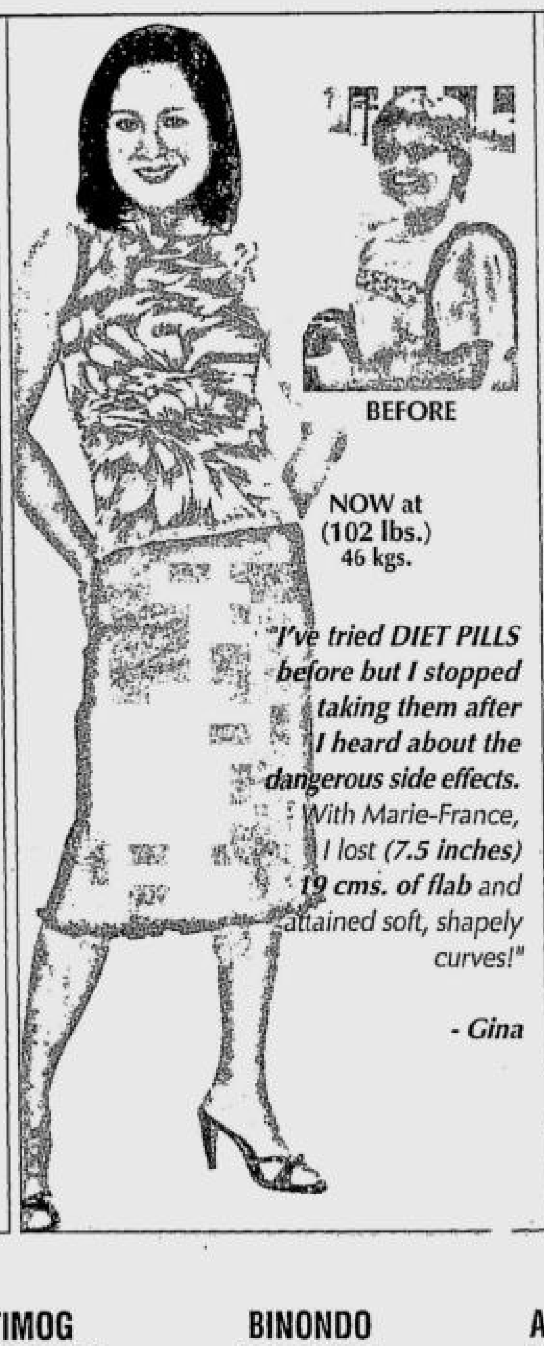

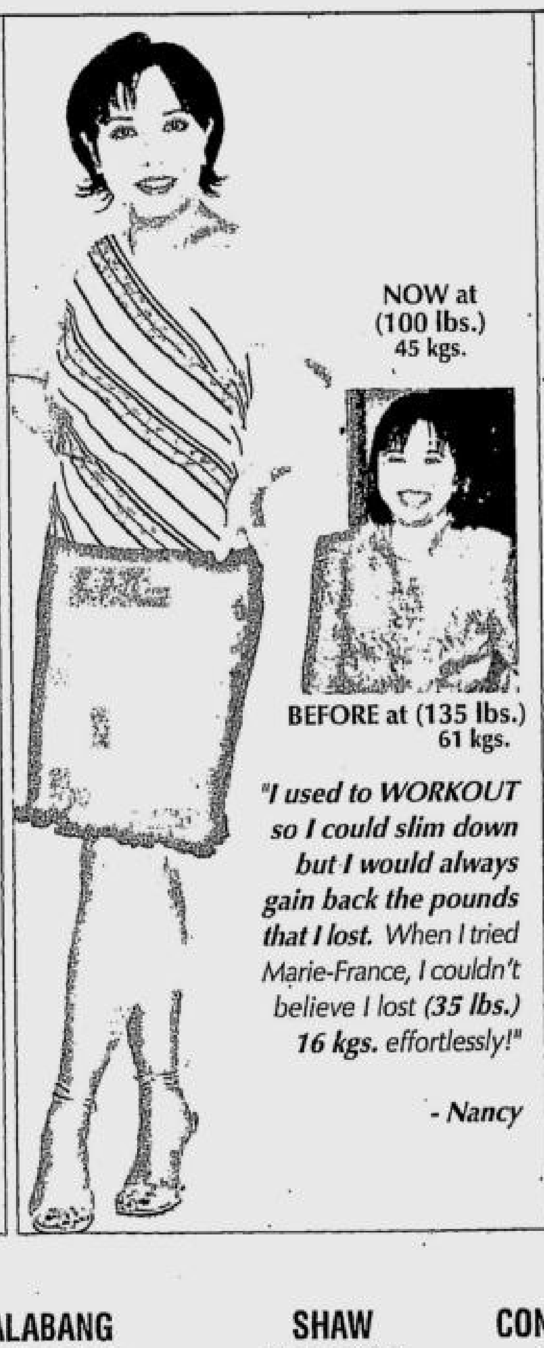

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Business to promote artificial family planning

By Blanche S. Rivera

CONCERNED about what it regards as the government's "lack of will" to check the runaway population, the business sector has taken matters into its own hands by initiating a nationwide family planning campaign that would promote the use of contraceptives.

The Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) is urging its member-companies and other large business alliances to join a "private sector-led national campaign for responsible parenthood and family planning."

In a resolution approved at the 24th National Conference of Employers in Makati City, some 400 employers from all over the country pledged to fund family planning programs to be set up in their companies.

Ecop president Donald Dee said the explosion of the country's population beginning in 1995 has deprived ordinary Filipinos of the benefits of the economic growth experienced since that time.

Data for the 10-year period from 1992 to 2002 showed the country's annual domestic product growth rate averaging 3.35 percent while population grew at an average of 2.36 percent.

"This means an improvement of less then one percent in the lives of the people on the average per year," Dee said in a speech.

"In other words, the effects of the present economic growth rate are wiped out by population growth," he said.

Noting the oft-repeated criticism that the government cannot seem to summon the political will to rein in population growth for fear of alienating the Catholic Church, Dee said the only way for the country to reduce poverty to "tolerable levels" is for the economy to "double its average growth rate to not less than seven percent per annum on a sustained basis."

The government's declared population policy is to promote family planning through responsible parenthood and the use of natural birth control methods in accordance with Church teachings.

The private sector-led national awareness campaign by contrast aims to promote the application and use of contraceptive pills and intrauterine devices in office clinics.

The Department of Health said earlier it was considering phasing out IUDs but would not initiate a move to ban them.

The Ecop and its partner organizations will work with the Department of Labor and Employment for the strict implementation of Article 134 of the Labor Code, which requires that company clinics provide free family planning services to employees.

The same article also provides for incentive bonus schemes to encourage family planning among female employees.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said she supports the move of the business sector as she herself believes in family planning.

The Philippines has one of the highest population growth rates in East Asia.

The country's 2.36 percent population growth rate is much higher than the 1.3 percent global annual growth rate.

If the population continues to grow at this rate, the country will have 160 million people in 28 years. This translates to a population density of 533 individuals per square kilometer.

I called on all saints–Bunye

DESPITE a painful back ailment that made him miss the US state visit of President Macapagal-Arroyo, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye has not lost his sense of humor.

Three days before the President was to leave, Bunye was rushed to the Makati Medical Center with a slipped disc, a spinal injury that made it very painful for him to stand or even sit. He was confined at the hospital from May 14 to 22.

His doctors recommended surgery since he had the "worst type" of slipped disc, but Bunye avoided the knife when his back responded to medication and physical therapy in the first two days of confinement.

Last Saturday, Bunye was well enough to issue a statement.

True to form, he made fun of what happened to him.

Although his role in the state visit would have been crucial, Bunye said he has realized that missing the trip was a blessing in disguise.

"Otherwise I would have landed not in Makati Med but in a US hospital. I would have been charged in dollars."

Even if he had insisted on going, Bunye said he would not have been allowed out of the airport since he was running a high fever at the time. A high fever is one of the symptoms of SARS, which was causing some panic in the country then.

Bunye recalled how excruciating the pain was, how he had to be taken to the hospital on a stretcher since he could no longer sit in a wheelchair.

"I must have called on all the saints, including those still waiting to be canonized, to relieve the pain," he said.

"When I could not endure the pain any longer, I prayed: 'Dear Jesus, I surrender to you all my pains.' It was at that moment that my turnaround started," he said.

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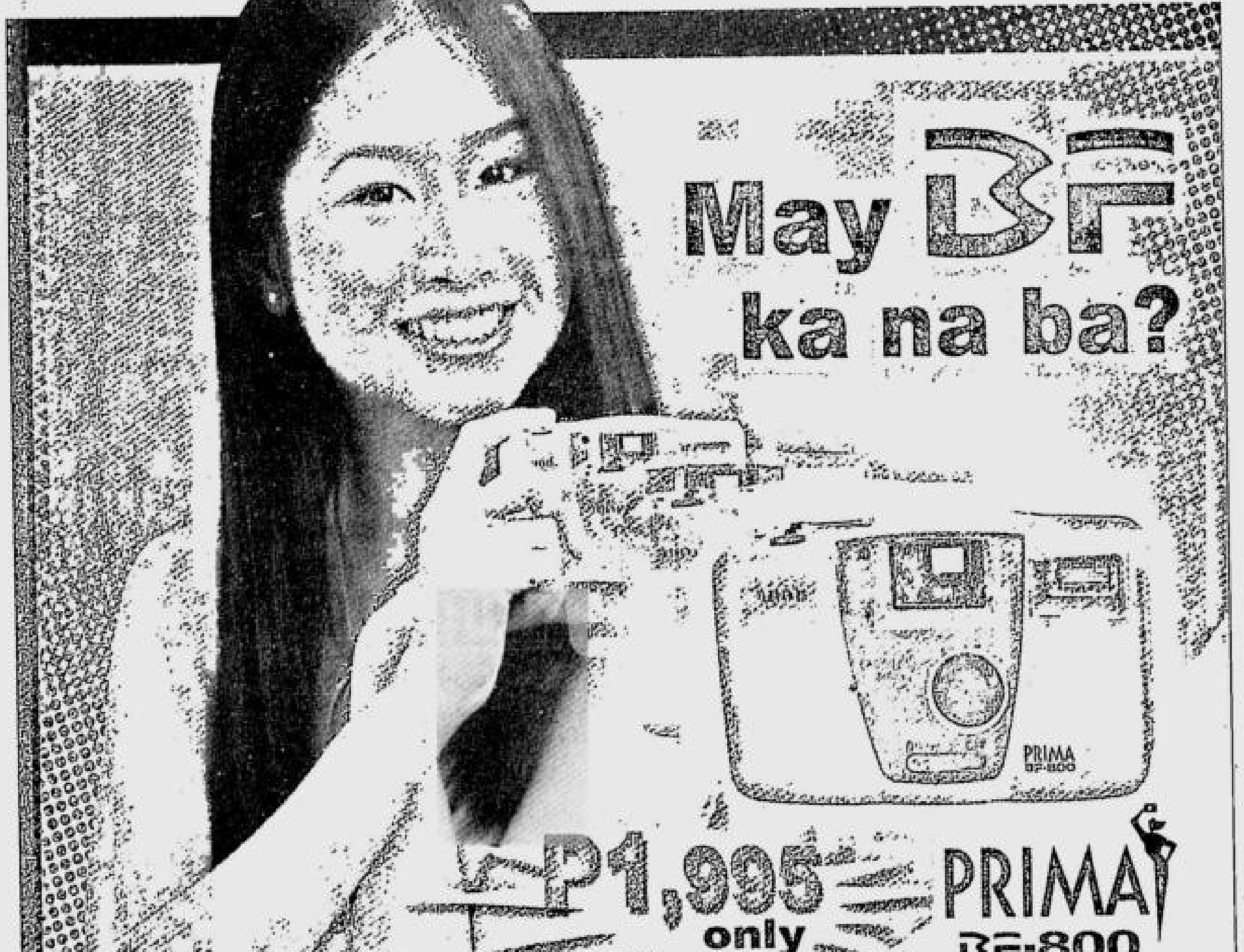

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'Tempest' in Senate high on Drilon's agenda

SENATE President Franklin Drilon said yesterday he would be calling a caucus of all senators this week to discuss the latest tempest in the chamber involving minority demands for changes in the Senate committee chairs.

Drilon, who arrived yesterday from the United States where he accompanied President Macapagal-Arroyo during her state visit to Washington, said he did not see any need for the Senate to embark on a revamp of its committees, whether involving chairs or members.

While he still has to be briefed by Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier and Majority Leader Loren Legarda on what transpired in the chamber last week, Drilon said he would schedule a caucus in the next three days.

He said he would not be able to call a caucus today because he has several official engagements scheduled, including the signing by the President of the Anti-Drug Trafficking Law in Malacañang.

Drilon said all the Senate committees were functioning, including those chaired by senators who have been absent for health reasons, Senators Renato Cayetano and Ramon Revilla.

For instance, the Senate education, arts and culture committee chaired by Cayetano has been taken over by Sen. Francis Pangilinan, who has reported out several committee bills and resolutions, he said.

But Drilon said he has yet to be updated on the status of the work of the Senate energy committee, which is also chaired by Cayetano but whose vice chair is Sen. Joker Arroyo.

During Drilon's absence, the opposition demanded a revamp of committee chairmanships following a heated debate with Arroyo over the latter's refusal to have his Blue Ribbon Committee investigate allegations that a Malacañang lawyer had demanded P3 billion from Fraport, the German partner of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co., the contractor of the Naia Terminal 3 project. *Christine O. Avendaño*

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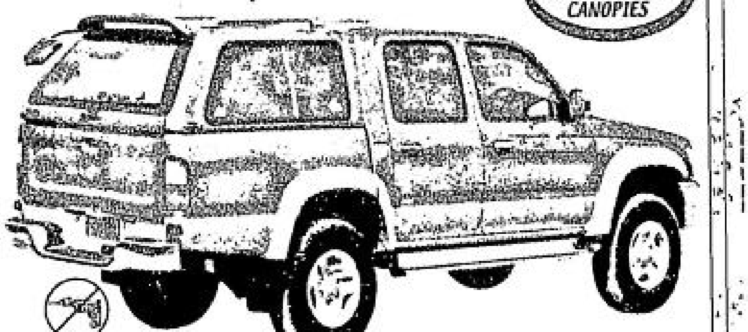

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Say goodbye to silent drills at PMA

By Vincent Cabreza
and Jovelyn Reyes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—Even the Philippine Military Academy must change with the times.

Sounding this theme, Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Narciso Abaya has ordered PMA officials to do away with rituals that tend to distract cadets and to "revolutionize the PMA's training methodologies" in order to increase the number of graduates.

The first victim of Abaya's directive is the "silent drill," the precision movements of cadets on the field enacted without benefit of a count or instructions. The drill has been a top tourist draw for the academy and the city of Baguio.

Abaya said many cadets who failed to pass had spent more time performing "silent drills" than attending to more "relevant" activities.

Distressing

"This fact assumes a more distressing tenor for me as chief of staff because the shortage of company grade officers, particularly in the Army, is a major concern of our field commanders," said Abaya at incorporation ceremonies for the 277 incoming cadets who comprise PMA Class 2007 on Saturday.

Abaya said he was "greatly concerned" about the steadily dwindling number of graduates the PMA has been turning out, in the face of mounting government pressure to launch a final military campaign against terrorists.

He said the military initiated its counterterrorism campaign in Mindanao, upon President Macapagal-Arroyo's instruction, despite the lack of 1,000 junior officers who would routinely lead these operations.

70% attrition

The academy's attrition rate of 70 percent—cadets who are discharged, made to repeat a year or officially separated from the corps—apparently accounts for the shortage, Abaya said.

"One factor that has been identified as contributing to cadet attrition is the excessive activities that slash precious time, (which) could otherwise be devoted toward more relevant endeavors," Abaya said in his speech.

"The aura and prestige of the cadet silent drill has been diluted (by the adoption of other institutions of their versions of the drill). The silent drill, I feel, has lost its uniqueness and mystique; even its distinct annotation," said Abaya, a member of Class 1971 but who graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

"The question of relevance, therefore, finds corroboration in the fact that many of the cadets who failed their academics were invariably members of the silent drill company," he said.

After recognizing the new fourth-class cadets, among whom is the 10th batch of 18 female cadets, Abaya ordered Maj. Gen. Edilberto Adan, PMA superintendent, to review all military rituals at the academy.

"I would like the PMA to channel cadet energies to more productive undertakings that would . . . make the training more attuned to the demands of the new officer after graduation," he said.

Reduced load

Adan, who sponsored a stakeholders' summit at the PMA last year to get ideas for reforms, said the academy is set to implement this year a reduced course load of only 146 units for Class 2007.

The PMA had been offering cadets between 234 to 240 units before last year's summit participants indicated the need to streamline PMA's courses, he said.

As part of the reforms, Abaya also ordered a cut in the benefits given to cadets in the name of "frugality."

Beginning this year, Abaya said cadets may no longer use their P14,000 monthly salaries and allowances to buy on consignment from "PMA-based entrepreneurs" items like divers' watches, brand-name jackets or athletic shoes.

"This early, our cadets must be made to appreciate the value of their money (and must be) trained to be prudent and responsible resource managers to prepare them for the time when they shall be entrusted with the taxpayer's money," Abaya said.

Top local papers to be cited

THE COUNTRY'S most outstanding community newspapers will be named on May 27 when the Konrad Adenauer Foundation–Philippine Press Institute Annual Community Press Awards is held at the Century Park Hotel in Manila.

On its sixth year, the affair is part of the 7th National Press Forum and the annual membership meeting of the Philippine Press Institute. The awards honor community newspapers that have done outstanding work in editing and reportage.

Finalists and regional winners for this year's awards are, in the weekly category, Golden Chronicle (Cagayan de Oro City), The Pangasinan Star (Dagupan City), Kapawa News (Bacolod City), Sun.Star Davao Weekend (Davao City), Bohol Chronicle (Tagbilaran City), Balikas (Manila), Southern Leyte Times (Maasin, Leyte), Bohol Times (Tagbilaran City), and The Voice (Angeles City); in the daily category, The Mindanao Gold Star Daily (Cagayan de Oro City), Negros Daily Bulletin (Bacolod City), Sun.Star GenSan (Gen. Santos City), Sun.Star Bacolod (Bacolod City), Mindanao Daily Mirror (Davao City) and Cebu Daily News (Cebu City).

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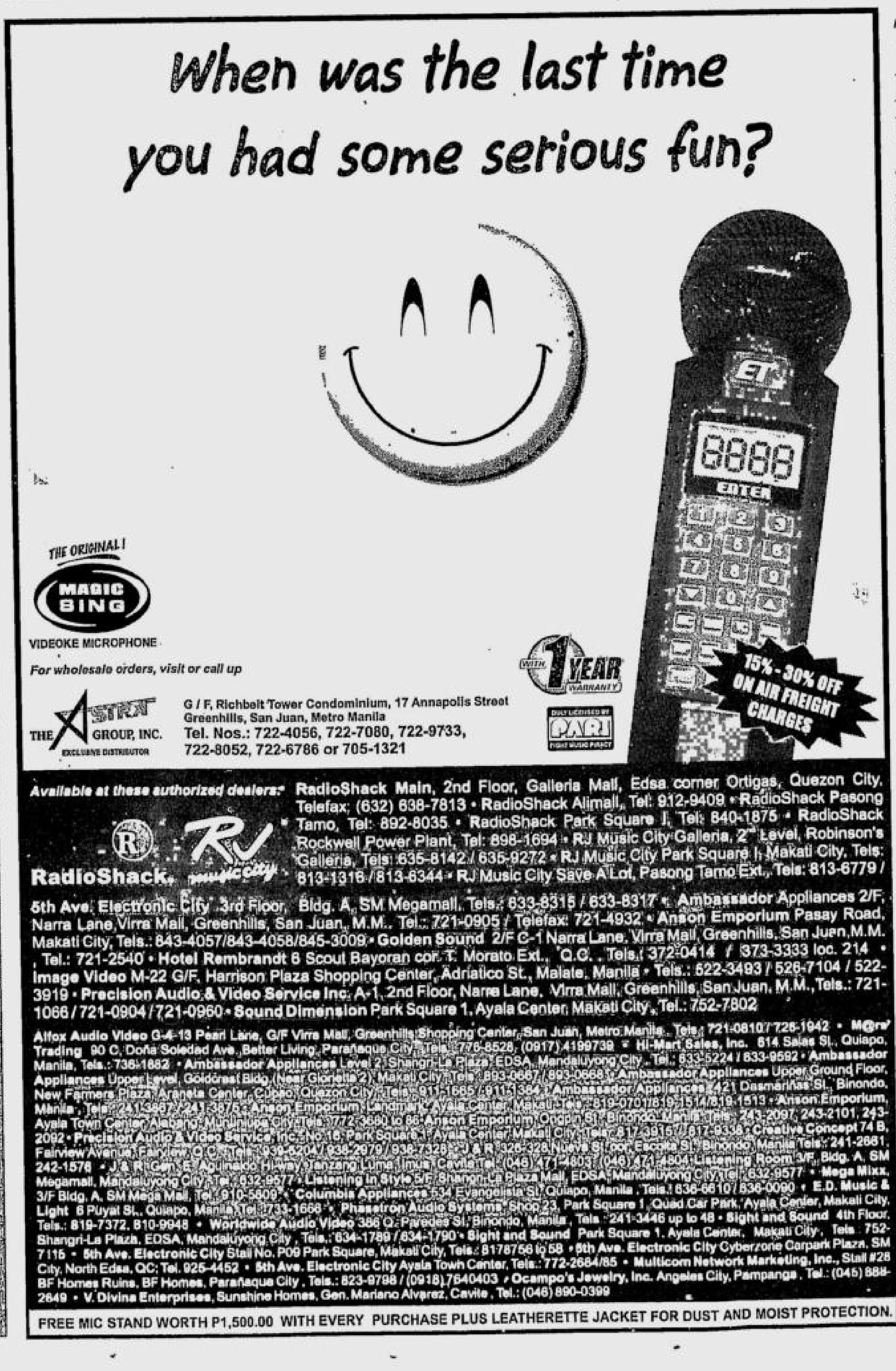
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RP firms fear loss of skilled workers to Iraq

By Blanche S. Rivera

WHILE THE government strives to secure contracts for Filipino workers in Iraq, local companies are apprehensive the massive deployment to the Middle East would translate to the lack of skilled labor in the country.

Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Sergio Ortiz-Luis recalled that at the height of the reconstruction of Iraq after the first Gulf War in 1991, "you could not even find a welder . . . or tractor operator here."

"They were all taken. So we have to prepare for this eventuality," Ortiz-Luis said in an interview during the recent 24th National Conference of Employers in Makati City.

The Department of Labor and Employment estimated that some 40,000 Filipinos worked in Iraq in the first post-Gulf war reconstruction.

Giant US construction firms that have been awarded contracts to rebuild Iraq are expected to source their manpower needs from the Philippines once again.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas is confident the Philippines has enough skilled workers to meet domestic and international demands.

"I think our pool of skilled and unskilled workers is vast and broad, so I don't think we would run out of workers," Sto. Tomas said.

She said "it would not be difficult to fill the international demand," noting the country has a 33-million strong workforce.

Philippine Overseas Employment Administration chief Rosalinda Baldoz said there are 950,000 skilled workers and 320,000 professionals registered in the National Manpower Registry.

The Philippine government has been lobbying American companies to hire Filipino workers in the rebuilding of Iraq.

But some of the US firms have reportedly cited the multi-million-dollar suits brought against them for alleged violation of the rights of Filipino workers they had previously hired as a reason for not hiring Filipinos this time.

Tutors try new tack to win House seat

BAGUIO CITY—After being rebuffed by the Commission on Elections and the electorate in 2001, the country's largest organization of public school teachers will try again to win a seat in Congress in 2004 with a new party-list group it recently formed.

The Comelec had earlier disallowed a party-list group composed of teachers because of conflict of interest—the tutors double as election registrars during elections.

Loreto Rafols, president of the Philippine Public School Teachers Association, said the PPSTA appealed the Comelec ruling before the Supreme Court, only to lose the elections to the House of Representatives later.

To skirt the conflict of interest issue, Rafols said the PPSTA has formed the United Retirees Philippine Public School Teachers Association (URPPSTA), which it intends to enlist this year in time for the 2004 polls.

Rafols, who is also interim president of the new group, said the URPPSTA has held elections for its regional and local leaders, and is prepared to campaign for party-list representation as soon as the Comelec approves its petition.

Rafols said public school teachers require better legislative representation, beset as they are with conflicting policies that affect their careers and lifestyles.

One such measure, Senate Bill 826, obliges teacher-appointees to undergo a separate consultative process before local school boards before their appointments to the local schools are approved by the localities, he said.

The Senate bill lists a new set of proposed amendments to the Local Government Code, said Vicente Cuelas, a member of an independent oversight committee of the PPSTA.

PPSTA regional and provincial presidents said here that teachers have been lobbying against this particular amendment.

Cuelas said PPSTA chapters have endorsed the URPPSTA.*Vincent Cabreza and Lord Alvin Madridejos, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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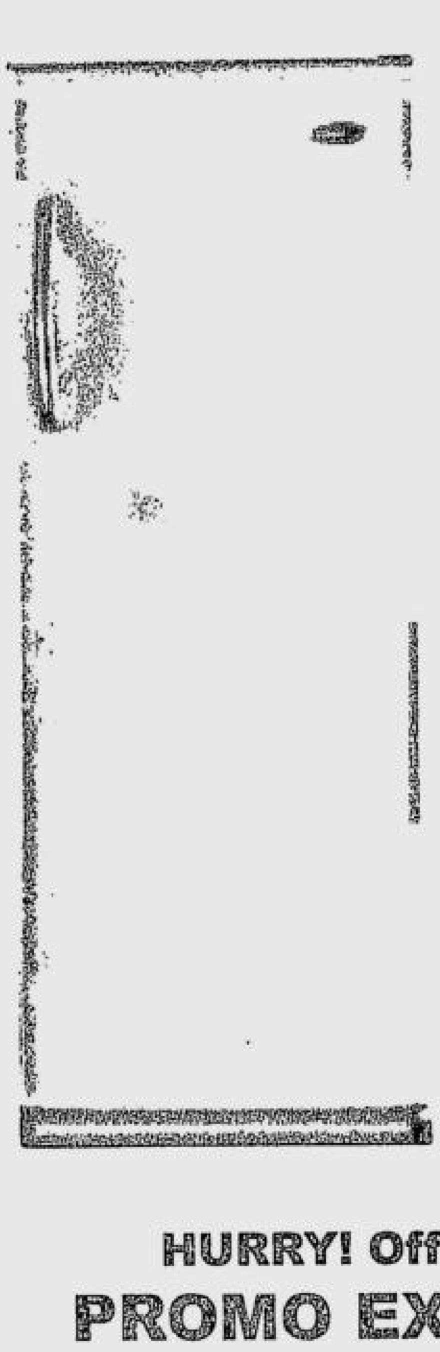

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Running in place

EDITORIAL

WILL the triumphs of May overshadow the promises of December? The President's state visit to the United States last week prompted speculation among both her own most devoted supporters and a skeptical public that she was reconsidering her Dec. 30 decision not to run in next year's elections. President Macapagal-Arroyo has since angrily denied any such thing, but it is only fair to note that the denial has failed to stem the tide of speculation.

The other day, we noted that the President's ire was better directed at the irrational exuberance of her own supporters; they had, after all, floated the idea in the first place. Today, we would like to raise what we believe is the real question: Do the President's actions since Dec. 30 in fact contradict her dramatic Rizal Day announcement?

The President appears on television several times a day, extolling the virtues of the so-called Strong Republic Nautical Highway. She visits the scene of every tragedy, or at least consoles the victims with her personal presence and envelopes full of cash. She drops in unannounced on police stations, bawling out officers who are literally sleeping on the job. And so on.

Many of the GMA Cares billboards have been taken down, but otherwise the President looks as if she is in full campaign mode.

It may be, as we would earnestly like to believe, that the apparent discrepancy between what the President says and what the President does is deliberate, a risky but necessary venture in expectation management. By fostering a sense of ambiguity about her ultimate plans for May 2004, Ms Macapagal effectively solves the lame-duck problem that afflicts all one-term chief executives.

Well and good, if that indeed were the case, except that when Ms Macapagal made her dramatic announcement on Dec. 30, she pointedly noted that the presidency retained considerable residual powers. Indeed, despite the vigorous wing-clipping by the framers of the 1987 Constitution, the office remains one of the most powerful presidencies in the democratic world. (Manuel L. Quezon's centripetal style, forcing everything political to revolve around Malacañang, remains the country's formative experience of the presidency.)

Ms Macapagal, therefore, did not see herself as a lame duck then, and there is no reason to think that she sees herself as a lame duck now.

It may also be that, given today's media-saturated political environment, the apparent disconnect between what the President said she would do and what she's doing now is inevitable, a fact dictated by the office itself. Perhaps, as her Georgetown classmate Bill Clinton discovered while he was in the White House, the exercise of the highest powers of the land truly requires the conduct of a perpetual campaign, an unceasing attempt to sell political products to an increasingly indifferent public.

Summing up a lifetime of research on American presidents, historian Doris Kearns Goodwin identified communication—"language"—as the "most powerful tool" of political leadership. "Without the ability to communicate, leaders can possess all the other attributes and still fail to have an impact," she wrote.

In today's TV-driven politics, the conduct of statecraft through media-managed events slowly but surely brings Goodwin's argument to its absurd limit: believing that policy cannot have an impact without the benefit of communication.

Do the President's media-genic actions give the lie to her Rizal Day statement? We will only truly know early next year, when the deadline for filing certificates of candidacy comes and goes.

Al-Qaida is back

FOREIGN COMMENT

BESIDES dethroning the Saudi royal family, the ambition of al-Qaida seems to have been widened to fight all western influence in the Arab world.

The number of deaths and ruins are increasing.

During the past weeks, international terrorism has, in an easily comprehensible and blood-curdling way, shown that the group is back.

The coordinated bomb attacks in Chechnya, Saudi Arabia's capital of Riyadh and in Morocco's commercial center, Casablanca, effectively refuted US President George W. Bush's statement recently in Little Rock, Arkansas, that the terrorists are on the run and that half the leaders of the al-Qaida network had been caught or killed.

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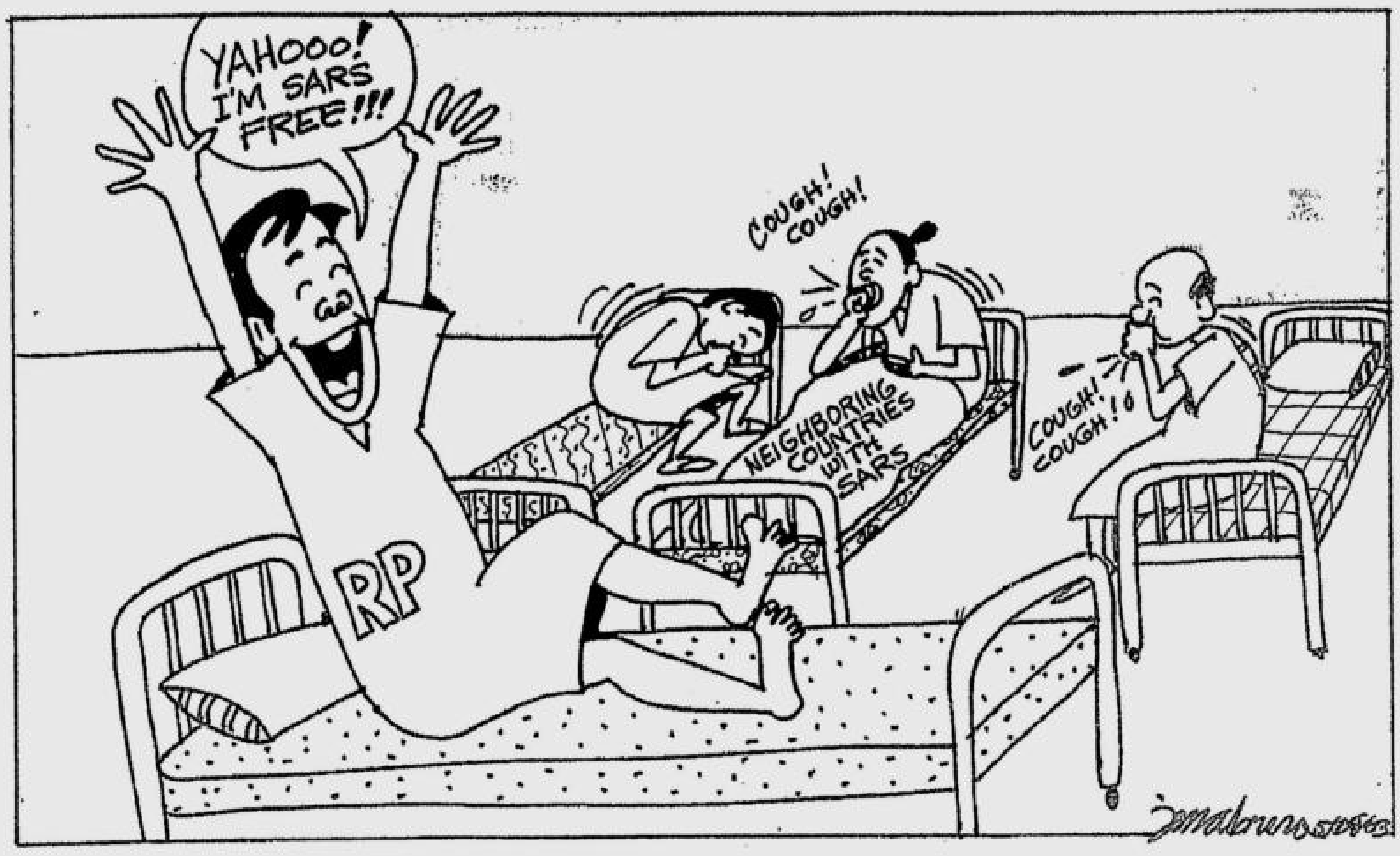
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To MMDA: Don't cut trees, plant them

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHY remove the trees on the center island of Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City? Overacting *na 'yan*! Director Angelito Vergel de Dios (what an ironic name for somebody who wants to kill innocent trees) of the MMDA Traffic Operations Center said it is to widen the street to accommodate the traffic during school days.

Big deal! If you must widen the road, why not expropriate a thin strip of the Ateneo campus? It is so big, a big part of it is just idle open space planted to grass. And in the first place, it would be the school and its students who would benefit from it. And why not stop the eateries on the other side from using the service road as their private parking lots? Is the MMDA so fed up with fighting sidewalk vendors that it is now turning its attention to tress?

If the MMDA gets its way in removing trees on the center island of Katipunan Avenue, in front of Ateneo and Miriam, it would have to do the same thing at the continuation of Katipunan behind the University of the Philippines campus and in front of the Balara and Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System compounds. There, huge, beautiful centuries-old acacia trees are on the center island. How will the MMDA remove them?

Vergel de Dios said the relatively smaller trees in front of Ateneo would be balled and planted somewhere else. (The mortality rate for this kind of operation is quite high.) But the acacia trees behind UP are very big (it would need at least three men with locked hands to embrace one tree trunk) and obviously they can't be balled. So will the MMDA cut them? How can they do such a vile thing?

The UP Integrated High School is willing to give up a strip of its campus for the widening of Katipunan, why can't Ateneo and Miriam do the same? Like UP, both of them have big campuses.

And anyway, the center island where the trees are can accommodate only one lane of vehicles. Not much improvement. Yet the sacrifice is too great.

Trees give not only shade and oxygen, they make streets beautiful and relaxing. They encourage people to walk, not ride, which is what we should do to relieve the traffic congestion. When we were going to school, even to college, we walked. Now students drive or are driven to and from school. That is why many of them are weaklings and are unhealthy.

Instead of cutting trees, the MMDA should plant more along the sidewalks. That would encourage students to take public transportation or get off their chauffeur-driven cars to walk part of the way to school.

Among the most shady, beautiful and relaxing streets in the world are those in Singapore because they have so many trees. And do you know where those trees came from? From the Philippines. They planted and nurtured those saplings from the Philippines and now they are being rewarded by the Philippine-born trees. How ironic that we in the Philippines cut down our trees. Most modern countries don't cut but plant trees along the streets. Australia, China, Japan, Canada, Russia, etc., they all know the value of trees. In Russia, there is a small tree—parked every few blocks in the cities. In China, sidewalks are very wide and lined with trees under which people walk and bike. In Australia, the malls have wide, tree-shaded walking avenues. In the Philippines, we cut trees. The site of the present SM Fairview in Quezon City used to be a mango orchard. The big mango trees would have made beautiful and cool promenades and parking areas. But they mercilessly cut down the mango trees and now the shoppers don't even have a bit of shade to park their vehicles in.

A tip to Henry Sy and his planners: The new Ayala mall in Greenbelt is the tony place to go now. You know why? Because it is beautifully landscaped with plenty of trees and plants. In contrast, SM malls are bald, big boxes of boring concrete. Also, SM and other malls are the big reason for traffic congestion on principal streets.

* * *

While we're still on the subject of trees and the MMDA, I would like to say, in fairness to the MMDA, that it is doing a great job in demolishing the stores of rich squatters along Commonwealth Avenue to widen it. And people were pleasantly surprised when they woke up one morning and found the *talipapa* against the back wall of the UP campus gone, thanks to the MMDA.

But instead of removing trees from streets, it should have a long line of trees planted all along the sides of Commonwealth Avenue, from the Quezon Memorial Park beside City Hall to the La Mesa Dam. I understand the Quezon City government, the DENR, ABS-CBN and the other groups will develop a part of the La Mesa watershed into a park that can rival New York's Central Park. Isn't it logical to have a tree-lined walking and jogging lane from the Quezon pocket park to La Mesa?

That will also prevent sidewalk vendors and squatters from encroaching again on Commonwealth Avenue. That promenade will be the boundary because pedestrians, bikers and joggers will be constantly using it.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: Woman to priest: *"Nag-iisa na po ako. Wala na akong asawa."*

Priest: *"Bakit, sumakabilang buhay na ba ang mister mo?"*

Woman: *"Hindi po. Sumakabilang bahay po."*

Little brown sister

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

"LITTLE BROWN BROTHER" is the title of the book Leon Wolff wrote in 1961. It was an eye-opener not just for Filipinos but for Americans as well, most of whom had grown up believing the American seizure of the Philippines, along with Cuba and Puerto Rico, before the turn of the last century was done with the noblest of intentions and wrought through the most benign of intrusions. The original title of the book was "Little Brown Brother: The Forgotten American Bid For Empire Which Cost 250,000 Lives," which was eventually shortened. The subtitle pretty much sums up what the book is about. The 250,000 lives were of course the Filipinos', the American occupation force, as in Iraq more than a century later, suffering few casualties.

Wolff's book told not just of the way a good portion of the new colony's population was wiped out but of the way the entire population's memory was wiped out. The first claimed only 250,000 lives, the latter the souls of nearly every inhabitant of the island. Superimposed on the horrific reality was the general patronage movie version of the occupation, not unlike Fernando Poe's, which told of the making of the "little brown brother," the sidekick, with the face of Dencio Padilla, who would forever be at the hero's side. It was to become the cornerstone of "special relations," relations which have proven especially comfortable for the United States and especially excruciating to the Philippines."

The phrase, "little brown brother," has come back to haunt, albeit with a slight twist. It is "little brown sister." That was the phrase that leapt to my mind when I saw Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo being patted on the back—literally—by George W. Bush last week, and accorded royal treatment, including an honorary degree by Fordham University. Well, the last wasn't such a signal honor. It has been given to every visiting Filipino president, except Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada. They probably figured it was straining credulity to confer a humanities degree on Erap. At least one of our more obscure schools had a point when it conferred that degree on Muhammad Ali when he came here to fight Joe Frazier in the 1970s. But that's another story.

The question that begged to be asked at the spectacle of the White House flinging its doors wide open to a Filipino president was: What epic accomplishment has GMA done? The last time a Filipino president was treated this regally, the honor was richly deserved. That was when Cory visited the United States shortly after Edsa. Her accomplishments were patent. She had led the campaign against Marcos during the latter part of his rule—I will continue to maintain that was made possible by the blood of the activists and revolutionaries who died early on, many of them in the prime of life—and ousted him. She had done the seemingly impossible, which was to unite the country and give it hope. The international press called her the modern-day Joan of Arc. It wasn't an exaggeration.

Yet even the reception for Cory paled before this. This was red-carpet treatment all the way, Bush himself leading the way to make GMA feel beloved. Why so? At the time GMA left her country, her country was mired in even more poverty than when she became President. At the time she left her country, her country was reeling from even more crime than when she became President. At the time she left her country, her country was suffering from more terrorism than when she made war against terror. What then had she done to surpass even Cory's accomplishments? What was she being bestowed all the honor for?

Nothing more or less than for being a Little Brown Sister.

Nothing more or less than for being the first to hitch on to the anti-terror bandwagon shortly after 9/11 and endorse the bombing of Afghanistan even though the Afghans had nothing to do with 9/11. Nothing more or less than for being, if not the first, at least the most ardent supporter of Bush's obsession to seize Iraq, and endorse his invasion of it. Nothing more or less than for proclaiming to the world she would stand by Bush through thick and thin, right or wrong, *walang iwanan*, even though they haven't found Saddam's weapons of mass destruction to this day. That is GMA's heroic accomplishment that has merited Washington's heroic gratitude.

It is hard to say bottomless gratitude because the gratitude is largely glitz. Whoever wrote this script understood the "Little Brown Brother" (or Sister) psychology very well, the kind Edward Lansdale and Imelda Marcos employed very well for their own ends. Forget the substance, mind the form—or the *porma*, as the Tagalog more accurately puts it. Forget the veterans, forget the toxic wastes, forget the cash, the important thing is the gesture, the blowout, the fiesta. That is the thing to appease the natives.

A friend of mine told me the pictures of GMA and Bush side by side suddenly brought to his mind images of the bars of Olongapo and Angeles. I agree. I myself saw in my mind's eye the pictures of Independence Day in 1946, an ironically named event presided over by American High Commissioner Paul V. McNutt, who forthwith gave us to know the price of independence was the loss of it, rehabilitation payments being premised on "parity rights." But my friend probably has the better image, evoking as it does lurid lights in dingy places and the bedraggled women coming out of them supporting the weight of drunken men with arms thrown around their necks and shoulders, behind the neon-lit billboard that says, "Little Brown Sister."

Close to 60 years after Independence, we have become neither brown—in thought—nor America's sister or brother. We have just become a lot littler.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com.ph

Vigilantes to capitalize on military impotence

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

A NUMBER of Mindanao leaders, including Vice President Guingona, have warned of renewed vigilante activities in Mindanao in the current fighting between the military and the MILF. This is indeed cause for worry, for the vigilante groups now against the MILF could easily degenerate into bandit groups and pose a greater problem for the military and police, especially in the field of human rights. They could escalate the violence in Central Mindanao and heighten perceptions of a religious war.

But to my mind vigilantes would take the law into their hands if the military and police are perceived to be helpless in securing the civilian communities. How? Mainly through the demoralizing pronouncements of politicians and religious leaders who are seen to favor more those terrorist groups that have shrouded themselves with the mantra of "ideology." This column has been batting for a more even-handed treatment of the protagonists and armed vigilante groups represent the danger arising from the lack of it.

* * *

As Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Eduardo Ermita pointed out at the dzRH Sunday program hosted by Cecile Alvarez and myself, the invitation for the Philippines to send its foreign secretary to the 30th Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the 57-member Organization of Islamic Conference, to be held in Tehran starting May 28, is very significant for us. At the simplest level the OIC members include the world's leading producers of oil, so it pays to rub elbows with them. Then too, the invitation indicates the Philippines is finally harvesting the goodwill it has invested among the Muslim countries, especially our Asean neighbors—Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei—which have been very supportive of the Philippines in its secessionist problem in Mindanao. President Macapagal-Arroyo has particularly cultivated Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's support on the MILF problem, resulting in Malaysia's brokering of the negotiations with the MILF.

* * *

Prior to this year's invitation, the Philippines has never attended the plenary session of the 29-year-old OIC, content with being a mere observer together with the MNLF. In Tehran, Foreign Secretary Blas Ople gets to have his own table in the plenary hall, with access to all the documents being handed out. Moreover, should the OIC bring up the question of the MILF, which is not recognized by the OIC, Ople and Ermita could immediately respond. The OIC meeting is also an excellent opportunity for them to explain the President's multi-pronged rehabilitation program for Mindanao's conflict areas, in the aftermath of substantial financial and logistics assistance from the US.

* * *

At Presidents' Bush and Macapagal's meeting at the White House a week ago, GMA spoke to Bush, among other things, about the idea of their sponsoring jointly the creation of a new UN organ, the "Interreligious Council" and the holding of a "Dialogue of Civilizations" in the aftermath of troubling world events since 9/11. Since the original proponent was Speaker Jose de Venecia, GMA told JDV to do the explaining. As I had stated, that was the chance that the great House of Representatives salesman needed to sell his idea to Bush with all his senior Cabinet officials in attendance.

* * *

Bush listened intently as JDV stressed that with the American leader's victory in Afghanistan and Iraq, he was hailed as a "Warrior President." But now Bush must become "the leader of reconciliation, healing, peace and unity, who seeks ways to breach the 'great divide' between Christianity and the other faiths, and the Muslim faith." JDV particularly stressed to Bush the need to dialogue and reach out to young peoples in the Muslim world and communicate to them "the promises of modernity and the opportunity it offers them to realize the fullest possibilities of their lives."

* * *

After JDV ended his discourse, Bush congratulated him for his "great idea," and directed US National Security Adviser Condoleeza Rice to coordinate it. A never-say-die fellow, JDV pursued his proposal for a global dialogue with the same passion as he did charter change. He talked about it that evening at the State Dinner with US Secretary of State Colin Powell, who was his seatmate at the dinner table, and Bush's chief of staff. Later, in New York City, JDV met with the US Permanent Representative to the UN, former Ambassador to Manila John Negroponte, for an hour to push his idea, and briefed the deputy secretary general of the UN (Koffi Anan was not in NYC at that time).

* * *

Earlier this month JDV wrote Dr. Rice about his concept of the Interreligious Council and multi-faith and multi-cultural dialogue. He pointed out that this form of dialogue is gaining wide acceptance these days in the aftermath of the end to the war in Iraq, and encouraged by the UN and the ecumenism espoused by John Paul II. Among the latest advocates is President Syed Mohammed Khatami of Iran. JDV stressed to Dr. Rice the need to have the dialogue "between religions, civilizations and cultures" preferably in Washington, D.C., "in order to help restore the social order shattered by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks; outflank the extremists on both sides, and achieve the multi-cultural understanding which is the only basis for the long-term security of the global community."

* * *

JDV stressed that the Philippines, "being uniquely situated by our culture and history," could help advance and carry this dialogue initiative forward. This idea of a dialogue has become hot topic now, as the world realizes the serious need to break down the worsening cultural barriers between the Christian and Muslim world.

Mindanao: Beyond banditry and armed conflict

COMMENTARY

Simeon A. Datumanong

MOVING forward with the national economic goals is synonymous to making Mindanao the country's food basket with its rich development potentials in agriculture, fishing and natural resources.

Looking beyond armed conflict and pocket banditry that Mindanao is often associated with, will rid the island of its backdoor image as the perennial gateway for smuggling activities and of illegal aliens (whose prosecution falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice).

Mindanao is the focus of the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo's national initiative program for various infrastructure projects that are now in place for the government's agricultural, transport and tourism development.

During the closing ceremonies of the Muslim leaders summit on April 25, the President launched the Mindanao National Initiative Program or the Mindanao Natin Program, which will put a huge share of the fruits of development through, among others, improved rural roads and irrigation facilities for enhanced agriculture and trade activities in about 5,000 barangays of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, and Central and Western Mindanao and the provinces of Lanao del Norte and Bukidnon in Northern Mindanao.

For urban and rural flood-control projects, farm-to-market roads and paving major highway links, there is the remarkable cooperation of and support in terms of loan package assistance from various international agencies.

But a major setback in such undertakings is the threat of terrorism in our midst, the global problem that calls for multilateral responses.

In the process of the peace negotiations, some supplementary interagency programs emerge to consider developing MILF camps into mainstream communities.

Generally, this is covered by the six-point agenda of the President's first State of the Nation Address, putting more emphasis on infrastructure support projects to the Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization Program.

The administration has achieved more in bringing back to the mainstream, through its various programs, some communities isolated not only by rebellion, but decades of underdevelopment and neglect. This is evident in the fast-tracking of a number of infrastructure projects supporting its commitment to peace and development, which include the Pagadian-Zamboanga Road; Basilan and Lake Lanao Circumferential Roads; the Malabang-Naga Dimaporo (Lanao del Norte)-Tukuran (Zamboanga del Sur); Cotabato City bypass road; Iligan-Aurora and Cagayan-Bukidnon-Cotabato Road, Matalam-Mlang-Bagontapay Road (North Cotabato); Isulan-Kulaman-Lebak Road (Sultan Kudarat), the Upi-Lebak Road, as well as the rehabilitation and construction of principal bridges.

Until recent years, one had to take a boat to Pagadian City (Zamboanga del Sur) to get to the Lanao city of Marawi or Iligan from Cotabato. And so the best route from Southern to Northern Mindanao was a time-consuming travel twice by land and an almost overnight cruise of the Illana Bay. The same was said of the tiresome route from Sultan Kudarat's capitol in Isulan town to the province's wharves in Lebak and Palimbang towns (i.e., separated by the Daguma Mountain Ranges). One had to travel by land to Cotabato or General Santos City and then take a boat on a four- to five-hour travel to the adjacent shoreline towns.

It has also opened the Nautical Highway that links the country's roll-on, roll-off ports for a more practical and cheaper way of transporting goods, anywhere from Batangas to Cebu and Dipolog.

For another phase of Central Mindanao's component program for the Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization Program, we have barely started a dredging project in Pulangi River (Rio Grande), the core undertaking for a multi-pronged flood-control program (dredging, reclamation, dikes, farm-to-market roads, as well as massive riverbank tree-planting and watershed reforestation). But I am confident that with the cooperation and support of other concerned agencies, the Department of Public Works and Highways will be able to continue the program.

In Mindanao as is often the case elsewhere, land disputes fuel armed conflicts. When I was public works secretary then, I was frequented by reports on project delays caused by opposition of parties contesting ownership of lands that national roads traverse.

Indeed, land disputes divide families and communities in terms of property claim interests, and eventually they lead to social discord and even armed conflict or worsen existing political conflict in their midst.

To provide a long-term solution to such a problem, the Department of Justice in cooperation with the Department of Agrarian Reform is trying to formulate plans and policies to advice the President on the need to establish a common land agency, which shall have the powers and mandates of both the Land Registration Authority of the DOJ and the Land Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

To institutionalize reforms in the prosecution process, we are planning to establish a Philippine Justice Academy, initially in the former Clark Airbase, which will offer special courses for prosecutors, law students and practitioners of the law profession in general.

Until then, we envision that institutionalizing of reforms in all levels of the prosecution system shall bring about the triumph that our people have long deserved in decades of struggle for peace, justice and freedom in this country.

(Justice Secretary Simeon A. Datumanong is also a member of the GRP panel talking with the MILF.)

Nato and the first democracy in Asia

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

AMERICA greeted Nato's new military and political ally in Asia with the following words of welcome from President George W. Bush to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on the South Lawn of the White House last Monday:

"The Philippines was the first democracy in Asia and has a proud tradition of democratic values, love of family and faith in God. President Arroyo, you are carrying this tradition forward, and I'm proud to call you friend… Mabuhay!"

I was dumbstruck reading the transcript. These bold words, are history being revised, live on CNN. No US president since William McKinley—not Roosevelt or Kennedy or Reagan or Clinton—has ever proclaimed the simple truth in those eight words: "The Philippines was the first democracy in Asia…" Bush's words contradict the history of Philippine-American relations as taught in America (except in hundreds of Asian Studies departments) and written up in history books (unless they've read the works of Teodoro Agoncillo, Renato Constantino, or UP's Dean Armando Malay).

Consider this. The Central Intelligence Agency's 2002 World Fact Book still lists July 4, 1946 as Philippine Independence Day. But that is a date long after Asian countries also listed could rightly claim to have set up modern democratic republics. Among them are China in 1911, under Sun Yat-sen, who claims Rizal as inspiration. Indonesia and Korea in 1945 could also claim precedence over "1946."

Colin Powell's State Department could not have ignored such simple facts of history as the date that Filipinos and others hold as the start of their democracies for GMA's state visit. Surely, George W. Bush was thinking of June 12, 1898, because why in the world would he refer to July 4, 1946 at a time like this? Why would he want to remind a major new military and political ally of a thorny issue of history, over which our two countries still disagree? It was Diosdado Macapagal, the father of his state visitor, who moved Independence Day from July 4 to June 12 during his presidency in the '60s.

This was done with a deliberate purpose that should not go unnoticed. We have wailed and waited for this moment for a century or more. The simple fact is that the Philippine Republic was born on June 12, 1898 when the Declaration of Independence from the Spanish Taliban was proclaimed in Kawit, Cavite by the revolutionary Katipunan.

Therefore, the first democracy in Asia is just a few weeks shy of being 105 years old on June 12, 2003—making us truly the "first" and "oldest" modern democratic republic in Asia. To save face, Spain sold her colony to America for $20 million in the Treaty of Paris that ended the Spanish-American War. This made inevitable America's first and only colonial war of conquest against an insurrection that was also our war to defend the infant Philippine republic. (It is as if France had declared war on England on July 5, 1776, bought America from King George at a Treaty of Madrid, subjugated and colonized her for 48 years, and made US Independence Day the same as Bastille Day in 1824!)

The Filipinos would lose that war, but America would give the Philippines everything Spain never did: schools, government, science, Hollywood. Still a century of nationalist resentment seethes in many intellectuals, pundits and local elites. Now, for the first time an American president seems to agree with them. I see the end of a great untruth because George W. Bush is a straight talking Texas cowboy. I believe he meant and understood the full import of "the Philippines was the first democracy in Asia." In fact, to our new allies in Nato—we are the oldest modern democracy in Australasia, since Australia gained independence on Jan. 1, 1901, and New Zealand in 1906.

Bush may be remembered as the US president who caused a long hoped-for revision in the official history of the Philippine-American War as written by its victors. It was not an insurrection. It was a war to defend the first democracy in Asia! We lost that war, but just as Great Britain once lost to America, yet stands with her today, so shall we, because we know the ultimate purpose. We share the vision of a world completely remade in democracy and liberty for each member of the human species on one indivisible planet.

Bush has taken the first crucial step to mutual catharsis in self-recognition. We must save the future history of our two great and noble peoples from the nihilistic vision of those who never emerged from the black hole of resentment and the white noise of amnesia. These evil forces are determined to use history in order to control the present. Yet most Filipinos remember the past not to destroy the future, but to build it.

As one of several important non-European Nato allies, we have new responsibilities that should be vouchsafed by formal instruments. Nato and its allies will replace the UN Security Council on crucial issues. We can be a Great Britain of Asia for the whole world, with our English fluency, our humanitarian resources of doctors, nurses, scientists and teachers, and our skilled and dedicated OFWs for whom the whole world is a work place. They are already dialoguing with civilizations.

Perhaps George W. Bush will come in late September with Bells on. Let us invite him to the Feast of Michael the Archangel at the church of Balangiga, there to bury the hatchet forever—again—between the first democracy in Asia and the oldest, strongest democracy in the world.

(Comments at www.deanjorgebocobo.blogspot.com)

Fair coverage of basketball events

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

LIKE it or not, sports in this country is associated with basketball. No sports event in towns or cities, including private corporations, is considered complete unless it includes this game meant for vertically advantaged men and women.

There is something about the way the game is played that makes Filipinos take to it with boundless enthusiasm and aspire for top honors from it in the Asian and Olympic Games in spite of significant height limitations.

Aware of this mania, the Sports section of the INQUIRER often carries news about the activities of whatever basketball group is currently playing. Take your pick from the Philippine Basketball Association, Philippine Basketball League, National Basketball League and a host of other alphabet associations in colleges and universities, not to mention the world-popular National Basketball Association of the United States.

The newspaper's coverage of the country's professional basketball league drew sharp comments from Erika Mae Santillan of Cainta, Rizal, a 16-year-old fan of the PBA. She wrote: "Lately, I noticed that news reports concerning the PBA are not given that much attention by the INQUIRER although it already has a separate sports page. Whenever I scan that section, I always catch sight of extremely large, full-colored pictures of the National Basketball Association players in action.

"I perceive that the INQUIRER gives the NBA a lot of importance. Another observation is, sometimes news about the PBA is not even included in the main sports page, making it look a bit insignificant. I wonder why the PBA can't get that much attention from the paper as well.

"There were so many times when I failed to watch the PBA games and, as a result, I had to read the newspaper to be updated. Unfortunately, the stories written about the PBA games are not as comprehensive as those of the NBA. I'm sad that you give much value to foreign leagues than to our own. The basketball players in the Philippines also deserve importance."

Deadline

I reviewed the past issues of the Sports section of the newspaper to validate the reader's complaint. Indeed, several colorful and dramatic NBA photos graced the section since its redesign several weeks ago. Complementing the pictures were interesting feature articles about top NBA cagers.

When asked to comment on the reader's observation, the head of the sports staff explained that there is no deliberate effort on their part to give premium treatment to the NBA at the expense of the PBA. The time the NBA games are played and the deadline to close the section for printing purposes influence the selection of the sports news and photos to be published.

The section has to be "put to bed" not later than 7:30 p.m. so it can make the first edition of the newspaper that goes to the provinces outside Metro Manila. (The closing times of the different sections of the newspaper are staggered to avoid overloading the printing equipment and ensure the quality of the publication.) At about the same time, the first PBA game scheduled for the day would be on its last few minutes or extended period if the game goes on overtime.

This constraint gives the sports staff no choice but use whatever sports materials may be available before the cut-off time. If the first PBA game ends before the 7:30 p.m. deadline, it is assured of inclusion in the sports section together with the reports on other newsworthy sports events that day.

To await the conclusion of the PBA games, which often go beyond 9 p.m., would mean depriving the provincial readers of the sports section. Only Metro Manila readers will benefit from that arrangement.

Compromise

On the other hand, the NBA games are played in the morning (Philippine time) which is evening in the United States. By mid-afternoon here, the international news agencies have already completed their transmission to the INQUIRER of news and photos of the concluded NBA games. These materials, plus reports on the PBA that have been submitted earlier, can be used by the staff for the next day's edition of the section.

To keep the readers abreast of the developments in the PBA games without sacrificing the reading pleasure of provincial subscribers, a portion of the Metro section has been reserved to carry the PBA game scores. Since Metro closes at 8:30 p.m., or one hour later than Sports, news about the final score of the first PBA game can see print at in Metro.

The result of the second game for the night, especially if it exceeded its allocated period, would have to wait for the following day's edition of the newspaper. The delay may be frustrating to PBA fans, but the sports staff thinks it's the best arrangement possible under the prevailing conditions.

The sports staff took exception to the reader's statement that the reporting on the PBA is not so comprehensive as that of the NBA. They pointed to the extensive reporting made on the pre-opening activities of the present PBA conference, the steps taken by PBA officials to cleanse its ranks of players with drug problems, and the Senate investigation of Fil-Sham players.

One final note. I watch the PBA games once in a while. But if I were made to choose between watching professional basketball, the NBA included, and local college games, the UAAP in particular, I will unhesitatingly choose the latter. There is something about school spirit that makes the latter more exciting and fun to watch. I could be wrong but that's my personal opinion.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

For the long haul

"We have to think long-term. We have to decide what's in our interest. We cannot allow emotions and sentiments to decide our policies."

—Former Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew on aligning his country with the United States to fight terrorism

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Top law firm's hand in coconut funds

I CAN easily understand why Sen. Edgardo Angara wants Danding Cojuangco to run for president and why he is washing the hands of Cojuangco on the coco levy scam. Angara headed the Accra Law Office, the legal mind said to be behind the coco levy scam. In fact, one of the 11 persons/entities who ended up holding the majority shares in the coco levy-funded companies—now under sequestration by the Presidential Commission on Good Government—is the Accra Investments Corp.

Lawyers of Accra appeared to have a major role as well in the acquisition of the San Miguel Corp. shares using coco levy funds. This huge acquisition of 31 percent of SMC shares were placed in the names of 14 holding companies, the names of which were patterned after the initials of Accra lawyers.

Angara implies the coco levy funds would not have grown that much if it were not for Cojuangco's wise investments and that no one can say that he indeed "spirited out" the proceeds of the levy. On the contrary, it should be noted that it was mainly Cojuangco and his cohorts who benefited from the use of the multi-billion coco levy funds. What originated from the meager income of the millions of poor coconut farmers was invested according to the private whims of the privileged Marcos cronies. This is clearly reflected in the Commission on Audit's report of 1986 on the coco levy funds.

The whole issue of the coco levy scam has slept in the courts for 15 years now. Only in recent years has there been substantial movement regarding the cases in court (not enough, however). Until today the real coconut farmers have not benefited from the amount. Not before when it was P9.7 billion and not today with an estimated value of P100 billion. But definitely the likes of Cojuangco and Angara have.

—JOEY FAUSTINO,
executive director,
Coconut Industry Reform (COIR)
Movement Inc.,
84 Unit 1 DN Masikap St.,
Barangay Central,
Diliman, Quezon City

Piatco's bid for just compensation isn't greed

IT was unfair of Amando Doronila to describe as "greed" the call of a Piatco lawyer for just compensation in case of a government takeover of Naia Terminal 3. (PDI, 5/9/03)

We are aware that Doronila is one of Piatco's most prejudiced critics, and we expect no good word from him. But it needs to be pointed out that, as on several other occasions in the past, his premise for making this latest criticism against the company that built Terminal 3 was way off the mark.

Doronila cited and quoted portions of the Supreme Court's decision that at first blush seem to support his view, as the quote stated that in case of government takeover of the terminal, Piatco could not obligate the government through a contractual stipulation "to pay reasonable cost for the use of the terminal." But what he did not say was that the takeover contemplated in this quote is not the takeover being planned by the government. Rather, it is a temporary takeover of the operation of the terminal that the government may opt to do in case of emergency, such as war.

The Supreme Court decision, it should it be pointed out, recognizes the private ownership of Terminal 3 but is silent on whether, after the contract is nullified, the government can or should take over the facility and operate it itself. That is the reason Piatco is opposing the takeover. Nevertheless, should the government pursue its plan to seize possession of the terminal from its rightful owner and operate it, the Constitution mandates that it pay just compensation. Piatco's insistence on such compensation should not be looked upon as "greed" on its part.

Doronila was also less than forthright in saying that the government paid millions of pesos for taking a portion of Nayong Pilipino to be used in building the connecting road between Terminals 2 and 3. He did not say that the transaction was between two government agencies: the Manila International Airport Authority and the Nayong Pilipino Foundation. Hence nothing was lost in the transaction, for it is as though the money was transferred from one pocket to another.

As for the improvement of the access roads, with or without Terminal 3, such project and the money spent for it shouldn't be considered as a loss as it results in the general public's comfort and convenience. There can be no offsetting here as Doronila seemed to suggest.

—MOISES S. TOLENTINO JR.,
vice president for
public affairs, Piatco,
jun.tolentino@pags.com.ph

BUS
STOP
THE ONLY THING WE CAN'T PROVIDE IS YOUR RIDE TO SCHOOL.
THE LANDMARK

SSS employee's error proving costly to retiree

I AM writing this letter on behalf of my sister-in-law, Teodora Tan Yu, a Social Security System member who retired in October last year at the age of 65. She has been a member of the SSS as a self-employed person since January 1988 and she religiously remitted her contributions in the hope that when she retired she would enjoy the fruits of her labor. At 65, she was looking forward to an SSS pension to help her in expenses for medication and other needs.

But when she filed for retirement last year, she was informed that she could not yet receive her SSS pension and benefits because the number assigned to her by an irresponsible SSS employee, 03-2103113-0, was owned by another SSS member who happened to have a similar first name and birthday as hers. Worse, the contributions paid by my sister-in-law was posted in the name of the other SSS member named Teodora Gineta Tan, and thus she was left with nothing to her credit.

Upon knowing this, we inquired how the situation could be remedied and the SSS Cagayan de Oro branch instructed us to wait while they verified with the central office in Quezon City.

After months of waiting, we learned that definitely a mistake had been committed. She was assigned a new SSS number (081376277-1) with instructions to reproduce all her supporting documents of remittances so that her contributions could be credited to her new SSS number.

It is certainly frustrating that because of the mistake of one SSS employee, my sister-in-law had to go through the wasted months of waiting, spend a lot to reproduce the supporting documents and traveling from Camiguin to Cagayan de Oro City. All these are taking a toll on her health since she is a diabetic.

In behalf of my sister-in-law and the other members, I ask for the speedy resolution of her case, while she is still around to enjoy the benefits due her.

—ROWENA C. YU,
2196 Macajalar, Camaman-an,
Cagayan de Oro City

Ally or colony?

THE "MAJOR non-Nato ally" tag is a farce.

Before everyone in the country gets giddy being called a "major non-Nato ally" by the Americans, perhaps we should consider what the term really means in the first place.

Did the upgrade in our status mean that we were considered a "minor non-Nato ally" in the past?

Remember that the Philippine-American alliance antedated Nato by many years and had already been tested in World War II, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, aside from the fact that for almost a century, the Philippines hosted America's biggest military bases.

As far as the Philippine government is concerned, we have never been anything but a major US ally. Apparently, the feeling was never mutual especially after the expiration of their basing rights in 1991.

But now, thanks to 9/11 and GMA's rabid support for President Bush's global warmongering, the Americans have realized again just how important we are to them.

Now that our status has been upgraded, we can expect more surplus war matériel and equipment, more USAID with strings attached, more funding for the war in Mindanao which the Americans are itching to get into.

The strengthening of our colonial ties with America in the framework of its self-serving, imperialist global war on terror is the essence of being considered a "major non-Nato ally."

Inuuto na naman tayo ng mga Kano. They are treating GMA as a glorified pawn. The worst part of it all is that GMA is loving every moment of it.

—TEODORO CASIÑO,
secretary general,
Bagong Alyansang Makabayan,
teddy@bayanonline.org

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

HK to check civet cats for SARS; 4 more dead

HONG KONG—Hong Kong plans to collect feces from civet cats to test them for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) following scientists' discovery of the virus in the weasel-like animal eaten by some Chinese, officials said Sunday as four more people died from the respiratory disease.

The latest SARS fatalities pushed Hong Kong's toll to 266, but there was just one new case, for a total of 1,725.

Hong Kong's Airport Authority said it would cut landing fees for flights restored after being canceled while the World Health Organization was advising people against traveling to Hong Kong. The government leader, Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa, went shopping to encourage others to start spending.

People in the territory are reportedly abandoning their house cats following research that may link the SARS outbreak to civets. Civets are not true cats, but they look like them.

People started taking their pet cats to grooming shops and leaving them, an animal cruelty society official was quoted Sunday as saying.

Cat owners left fake phone numbers and never returned to pick up their pets, according to a South China Morning Post report that quoted Dr. Pauline Taylor, acting executive director of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA).

Workers at several grooming shops called by The Associated Press said Sunday they had not heard of any cats being left behind, and the SPCA did not return a reporter's phone calls.

Hong Kong researchers said Friday they found the virus in civet cats in China's Guangdong province, which neighbors Hong Kong, and they believe SARS jumped from the animals to humans.

Conservation workers in Hong Kong will collect feces samples left by the mainly nocturnal creatures in the wild and have them tested for the SARS virus, a member of the coronavirus family, said Susanna Ho, a spokesperson for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

As a precaution, Hong Kong announced Saturday it would temporarily ban the import of civet meat and officials warned people to stay away from the few civet cats living here in the wild.

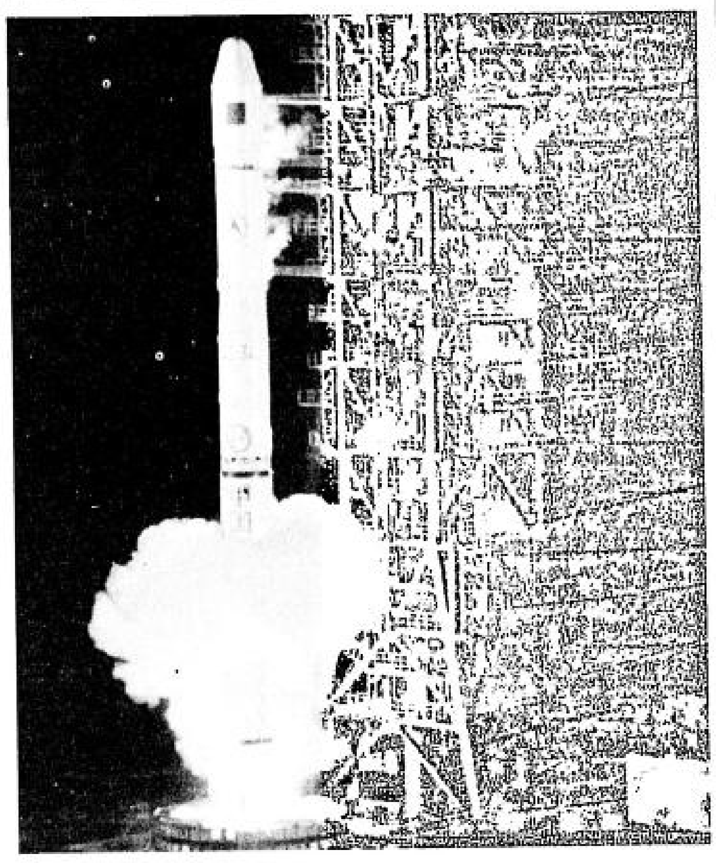
Civet cat farmers in Taiwan were angered by the Hong Kong report.

"We've spent most of every day with them in the past 20 years," said Tseng Fu-tsun, holding two civets as ETTV television interviewed him at his farm in Nantou, central Taiwan. "If they carried the virus, Taiwan would have had a big outbreak long time ago."

Hong Kong's outbreak of SARS appears to be contained. There was just one new case on Sunday, and none at all on Saturday—the first time no SARS infections were reported since the government started releasing daily statistics in March.

The Geneva-based WHO on Friday lifted an advisory that people stay away from Hong Kong.

People have started shedding their surgical masks and resuming normal activity. Thousands went on local sightseeing excursions Sunday, and television station TVB showed footage of a street full of people waiting to get on tour buses. *AP*



LONG MARCH 3-A

The carrier rocket, Long March 3-A, blasts off at 00:34 (Beijing Time) from the Xichang Satellite Launching Center in southwest China's Sichuan Province Sunday on May 25. The rocket successfully put China's third Beidou navigation and positioning satellite into orbit early Sunday, a move indicating China has completed its own satellite navigation and positioning system. AP

They do: Giuliani weds longtime.companion

NEW YORK—Former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and his longtime companion tied the knot Saturday night in a 15-minute ceremony before 400 guests gathered on the lawn outside Gracie Mansion.

Giuliani and Judith Nathan recited traditional wedding vows before Mayor Michael Bloomberg under an altar surrounded by yellow flowers and facing the East River, said Giuliani spokesperson Sunny Mindel.

The bride wore a Vera Wang oyster-colored silk gown with a halter neck and a foot-long train, with a 19th century diamond-and-pearl tiara on her head, Mindel said.

The 40-something nurse's father, Donald Stish Sr., gave her away, while Nathan's daughter, Whitney, was maid of honor. Giuliani's 17-year-old son, Andrew, was best man.

After the ceremony, guests dined on rack of lamb, striped bass and an eight-tiered yellow butter wedding cake filled with fresh raspberries.

Asked whether he was nervous before the ceremony, Giuliani replied, "No, not at all. I've performed 200 of these as mayor."

He arrived at his former home with son Andrew and daughter, 13-year-old Caroline, saying "I feel absolutely wonderful. I feel terrific."

Giuliani started seeing Nathan more than three years ago while still married to Donna Hanover, who drove him out of Gracie Mansion after their 20-year marriage fell apart. He had spent the previous seven years living there while running the city.

Their divorce became final last July, with Giuliani agreeing to pay Hanover more than $6.8 million. Hanover, too, has since found love again. She reunited with her old high school sweetheart, and they became engaged in March. *AP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, May 26, 2003
6th Week of Easter

1st Reading: **Acts 16:11-15**
Gospel: **Jn 15:26-16:4**

Jesus said to his disciples, "From the Father, I will send you the Spirit of truth. When this Helper has come from the Father, he will be my witness, and you, too, will be my witnesses for you have been with me from the beginning.

"I tell you all this to keep you from stumbling and falling away. They will put you out of the Jewish communities. Still more, the hour is coming when anyone who kills you will claim to be serving God; they will do this because they have not known the Father or me. I tell you all these things now so that when the time comes you may remember that I told you.

"I did not tell you about this in the beginning because I was with you."

Commentary

Men and women in the so-called Pentecostal or Charismatic groups amaze us at how they frequently, intimately, and freely address him. Songs that acclaim his gifts and whose melodies bespeak his consoling presence abound. These are beautiful achievements that recognize the Spirit sent by Jesus from the Father to continue his presence among his disciples. Yet it is not to be ignored that Jesus also commissioned those "who had been with him from the beginning" to testify to him. They received the commission to teach, welcome people into the faith, and guard them against error. It is a mistake to pit the "charismatic" against the "institutional" church. Holy Spirit is at work in all, but he gives to each one a different gift (1Cor 12).

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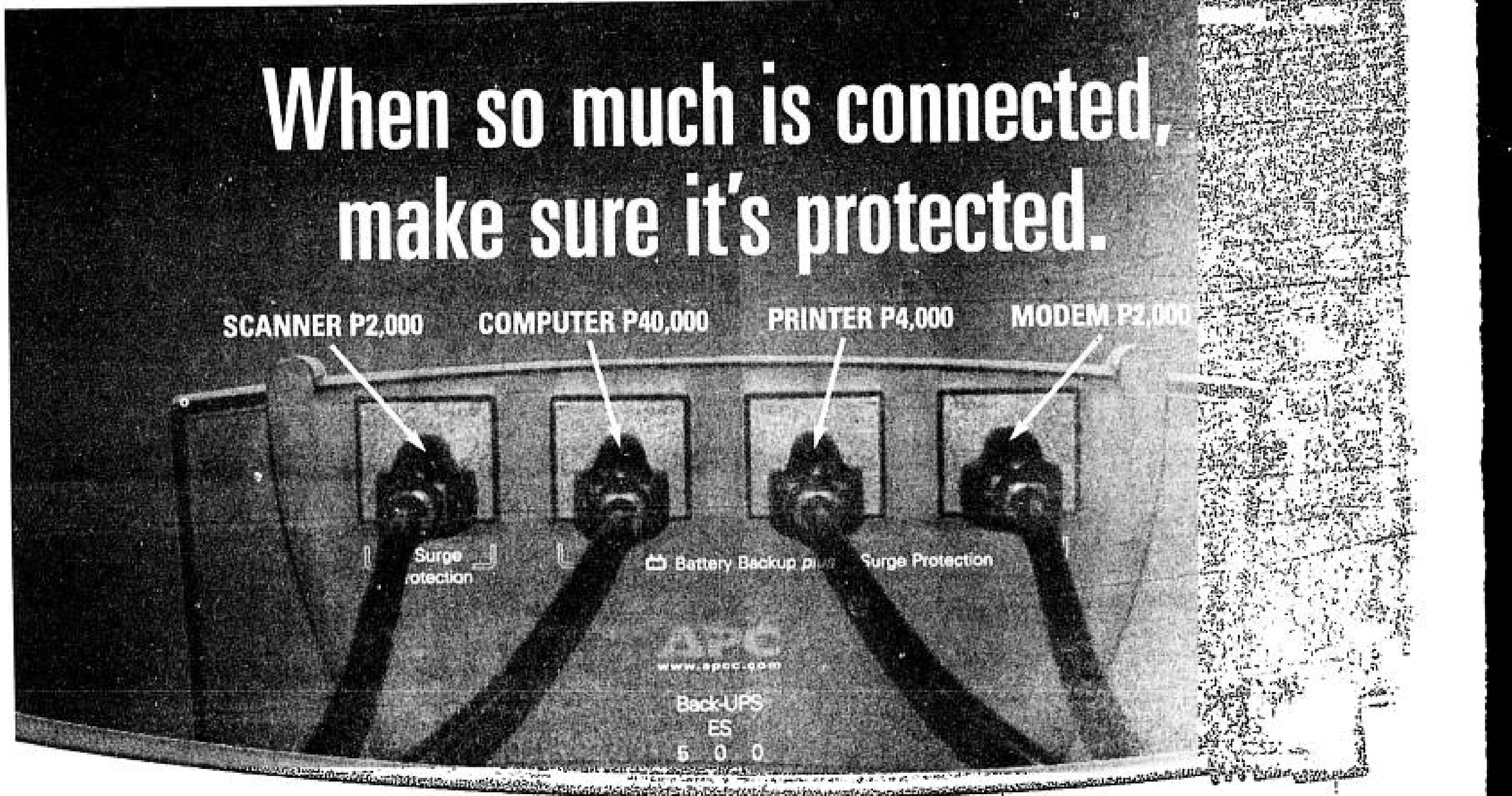

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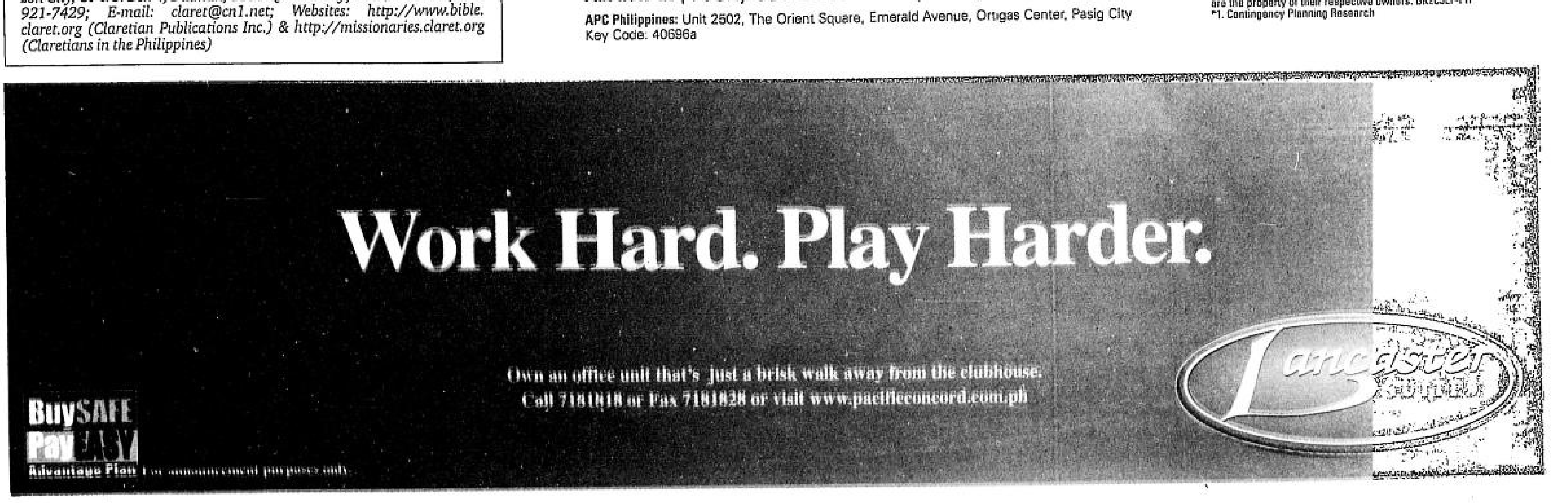

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Angry quake survivors hurl stones at president

BOUMERDES, Algeria—The death toll from a devastating earthquake in northern Algeria rose to more than 2,000 Sunday, hours after furious crowds hurled debris and insults at the country's president when he visited the quake zone.

Many blame the government for the high death toll and shortages of food and water after the 6.8-magnitude quake flattened villages east of Algiers on Wednesday. The interior ministry said at least 2,047 people were killed and 8,626 injured, the official APS news agency reported.

The death toll was expected to rise as bodies were pulled from the rubble and Hakim Mohand, of the Algerian civil protection unit, said it could reach 3,000.

The anger came as Japanese rescue workers said they pulled a survivor—a 21-year-old waiter—from the rubble of a hotel on the Mediterranean coast Friday midnight.

President Abdelaziz Bouteflika tried to tour the quake-ravaged town of Boumerdes on Saturday, but angry crowds harangued him with shouts of "pouvoir assassin!"—a common slogan roughly translated as "the authorities—killers."

Bouteflika cut his visit short. Police fought to hold back the crowd as he drove away, with many people throwing chunks of rubble and other objects at his car and some kicking the cars in his motorcade.

The president faced similar anger later in the day in Lakhdaria, where one elderly protester loudly accused the government of misappropriating international aid meant for quake victims.

He later shrugged off the protests, calling them "testimony to the vitality of Algerian youth."

The abuse directed at Bouteflika and other officials was a bold display of criticism against a military-backed government known to clamp down on dissent.

Amid the strife and destruction, Japanese aid workers—after 3½ hours of digging through the wrecked Adim Beach Resort at Zemmouri—rescued a man who somehow had escaped injury.

"It was almost a miracle. He was unscathed," said Toshimitsu Ishigure, director of the Japanese Overseas Disaster Assistance. "He was able to breathe because he had a half-foot of space from a slab lying on top."

Hope of finding further survivors, however, was evaporating. Ishigure said rescues became far less likely more than 72 hours after a quake, and British officials said Saturday they soon would withdraw rescue workers and replace them with relief and recovery experts.

The threat of disease was rising, they said, especially with temperatures rising to almost 40 degrees Celsius.

"Other risks such as infection must be tackled," Willie McMartin of Britain's International Rescue Corps told the Press Association news agency in Algeria. "There is an immediate need for disinfectant to be sprayed."

People across the quake zone accused the government of inadequately providing food, medicine and blankets. Some said government failure to rush mechanical diggers to affected areas delayed rescues and contributed to the death toll.

In Bordj Menaiel, a town of 20,000 built largely by Algeria's former French colonial rulers, residents claimed the government had done nothing to help them. *AP*

VOLUNTEERS carry food supply in Zemmouri, east of Algiers, on May 24, three days after a major earthquake struck the region, killing more than 2,000 and wounding thousands more. Grief turned to anger as survivors of the devastating earthquake in Algeria faulted inadequate rescue efforts and shoddy construction for the high death toll. AP

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Explosions rock town in North Aceh

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—A series of explosions rocked the district town of Lhokseumawe in North Aceh Sunday, as the death toll continued to mount at the end of the first week of a massive government operation to crush separatist rebels in the province.

At least five people were killed or found dead across Aceh by noon Sunday, witnesses and police said, while a delegation of five government ministers arrived to asses the situation.

Three explosions heard behind the fish market in Lhokseumawe around 9:10 a.m. sparked panic in the market.

"They came from above," said a woman who heard the explosions, like loud thumps, which caused windows to shake more than one kilometer away.

Brig. Gen. Bambang Darmono, deputy chief of the Aceh military operations, told journalists later that the three explosions were caused by bombs dropped from Air Force planes.

"They were sonic bombs, aimed at demoralizing the enemy, in this case, demoralizing the GAM in the Sawang and Nissam areas," Darmono said.

Hundreds of residents living along the city's shoreline fled or were asked by the military to move to a local mosque at the time of the explosions.

"The military told us to come here," one woman said.

"We gathered you here to avoid unpleasant things happening between GAM and TNI," a plainclothes soldier with a rifle slung over his back told the crowd of mainly women and children.

Another blast late Saturday at the Puesong market in downtown Lhokseumawe appeared to have been produced by a homemade bomb, a captain at the military media center said.

There were no casualties as the market, one kilometer from the military headquarters, was empty, the captain said.

He could not immediately confirm reports by witnesses that some four hours earlier, a grenade targeting the helicopter pad near the military headquarters was launched by an unidentified group.

Aceh has been under martial law since Monday as up to 40,000 police and soldiers confront what the government estimates are around 5,000 rebels from the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), which has been fighting for an independent state since 1976.

The bodies of two alleged GAM rebels lay beside the main road on the eastern edge of Lhokseumawe Sunday.

"We had suspected them for a long time," a soldier at the scene said. "When we stopped them, they tried to shoot." One of the alleged rebels had shot and killed a woman and wounded her daughter, the soldier said. Bullets and a grenade lay next to their bodies.

Two other bodies were found at separate locations in Aceh Besar district on Sunday, humanitarian activists there said.

Darwis Jeunib of the local GAM command said he had seen rebels kill one soldier during an attack on a military post in the Bireun district on Saturday. *AFP*

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Queen's rep in Australia quits amid rape scandal

SYDNEY—The British queen's representative in Australia on Sunday offered to resign as nominal head of state following rape accusations and separate allegations that he did not act against child-abusing clergy when he was an Anglican Church archbishop in the 1990s.

Governor General Peter Hollingworth, who temporarily stepped aside earlier this month, denied any wrongdoing, but said the scandals compelled him to quit. No other holder of the century-old vice regal office has ever been forced to leave in such controversial circumstances.

"Despite the misplaced and unwarranted allegations made against me as governor general, it is clear that continuing public controversy has the potential to undermine and diminish my capacity to uphold the importance, dignity and integrity of this high office," Hollingworth said in a statement.

"It is with deep regret and after much thought that I have today advised the Prime Minister that I wish to resign from the Office of Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia," he added.

Hollingworth, 68, has been under intense pressure to quit because of unproven accusations that he raped a woman 40 years ago. An Anglican Church inquiry also found that while he was archbishop of Brisbane a decade ago, he'd allowed a known pedophile to continue working as a priest. He has admitted "errors in judgment" from the priest scandal.

Anti-child abuse activists and lobbyists wanting to end the British monarch's reign welcomed the news.

Hollingworth said he had asked Prime Minister John Howard "to put the necessary arrangements in place to advise Her Majesty, the Queen. I proposed to make a more detailed statement to the Australian people later this week." *AP*

US cuts off contacts with Iran

POWERED PARACHUTE FLY-IN AP

A powered parachute soars across the evening sky near Hutchinson, Kan. on Friday, May 23. Nearly 30 powered parachute enthusiasts from across Kansas traveled to Hutchinson for the second annual Central Kansas Powered Parachute Fly-In.

WASHINGTON—Washington has cut off contacts with Iran and is considering "public and private actions" to destabilize the Iranian government, The Washington Post reported Sunday.

Top members of President George W. Bush's administration will meet Tuesday to discuss strategy toward the Islamic republic amid allegations that it is harboring members of the al-Qaida terror network, the report said.

Pentagon officials are advocating trying to foment a popular uprising to topple Iran's government, and the state department may accept that approach if Iran does not take steps to crack down on al-Qaida by Tuesday, the Post said.

Iran broke off relations with the United States after its 1979 Islamic Revolution, and Bush last year famously labeled it part of an "axis of evil" along with Iraq and North Korea. US officials have also been worried about Iran's nuclear program.

But the two sides made "discrete contacts" before and during this year's war on Iraq, most recently through a secret meeting in Geneva on May 3.

Washington canceled a subsequent meeting after the May 12 bombings in Saudi Arabia, the Post said, after reviewing intelligence intercepts that reportedly show that al-Qaida operatives hiding in Iran were involved in planning the attacks, which killed 34, including nine suicide bombers.

Iran has denied that it is harboring members of the network. But the Post cited an administration official as saying fewer than a dozen al-Qaida operatives were hiding in an isolated part of northeastern Iran where the government has little control.

"I don't think the elected government knows much about it," the official told the Post.

In an interview published in Saturday's edition of the Arabic daily Al-Hayat, Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi acknowledged that contact had been broken but again denied that Iran was harboring al-Qaida members.

"The US-Iranian dialogue has stopped for the moment and we see no need to resume it because the United States is not serious in its intentions and does not respect its promises," he said.

Kharazi said the dialogue had focused on the formation of a new government in neighboring Iraq after the ousting of President Saddam Hussein by US-led forces.

"Our position with regard to al-Qaida is very clear and very transparent," he added.

"So far we have apprehended hundreds who entered Iran illegally from Pakistan and Afghanistan and sent them back to where they came from or to their countries of origin, particularly Saudi Arabia.

"We will never allow our country to be a base for ill-intentioned people. With regard to Saudi Arabia, we are cooperating with it and this is continuing. All the American accusations are baseless." *AFP*

Paul sings in ex-USSR

MOSCOW—Paul McCartney became the first Beatle to sing inside the Kremlin walls, treating President Vladimir Putin to an impromptu version of "Let it Be" before singing to thousands of Russians on Red Square.

Putin, who confessed to being a Beatles fan in his youth, told McCartney the band had been an inspiration during Soviet times, despite Kremlin efforts to discourage Western music.

"It was very popular, more than popular," Putin said when asked whether he had listened to the Beatles when contacts with foreign music were discouraged. "It was like a breath of fresh air, like a window on the outside world."

McCartney met Putin in the Kremlin for tea and a guided tour, hours before the first Russian show in the musician's 40-year career. He treated 20,000 spectators to three hours of hits, including "Back in the USSR." *Reuters*

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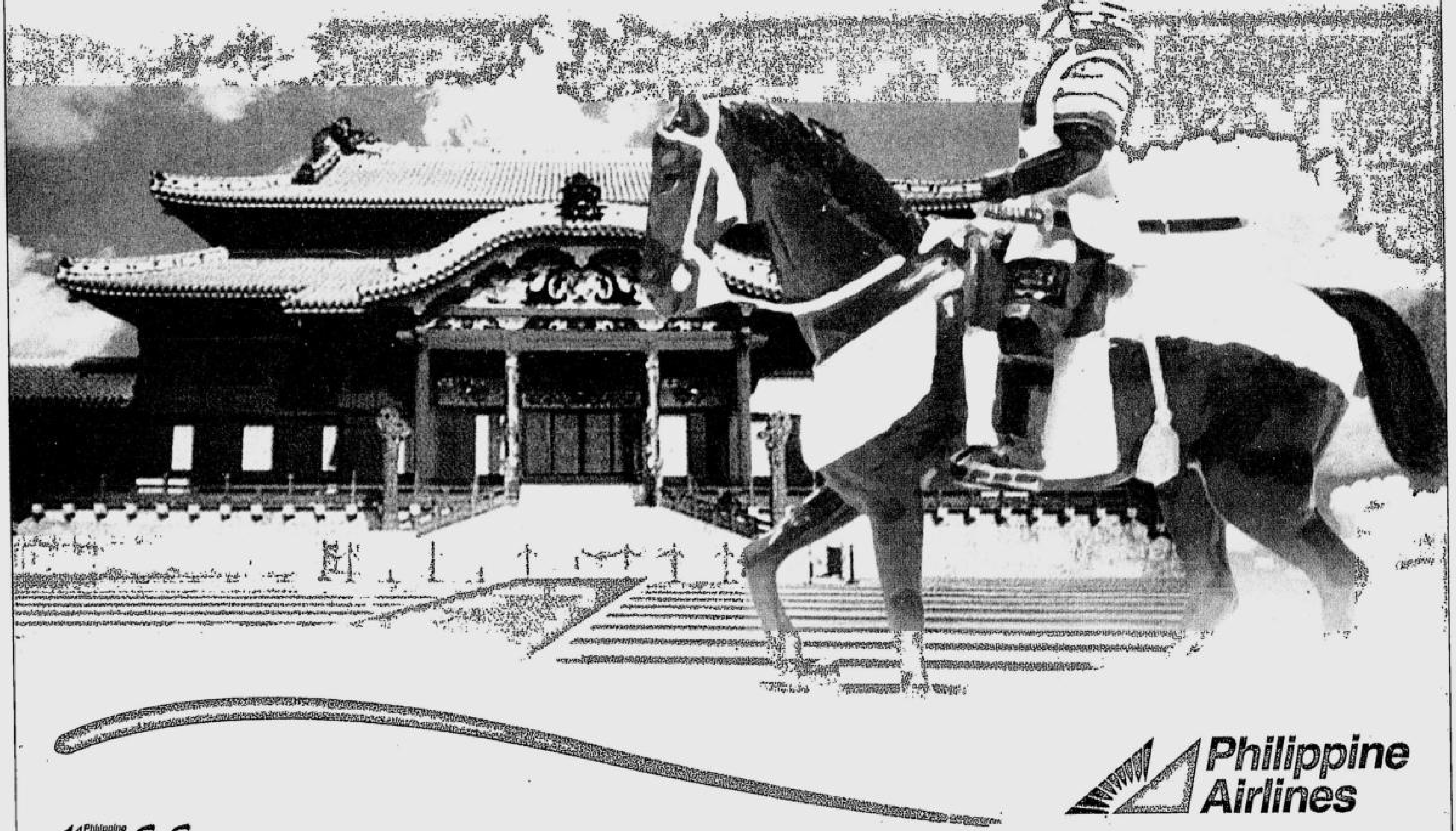
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Assistant Editor **Tony Bergonia**

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20 soldiers raid youth summer camp

DAVAO CITY—What was supposed to be a splendid experience for about a hundred street children, prostituted girls and child laborers turned into a nightmare when about 20 soldiers and barangay 'tanod' (guards) raided a summer camp inside a private property in Malagos, Baguio District here on Saturday morning.

Bernie Mondragon, coordinator of the Kabataan Consortium, the group behind the summer camp, said the soldiers later apologized saying they were only acting on reports about the presence of communist rebels in the area.

Even then, Mondragon said they reported the incident, which he described as "very traumatic for the participants aged 10-12 years old" to the local police.

Mondragon said the soldiers belonging to the 73rd Infantry Battalion entered the youth camp around 4:30 a.m., woke up the children at gunpoint and then herded them to a secluded area.

He said a child even pulled the soldier when he woke him up, thinking a companion was only cracking a joke.

But they cried when they found out it was for real. Some of them were even told to place their hands on their heads.

Mondragon said the soldiers did not wear nametags. They also confiscated cellular phones owned by the children, but later returned them.

"The display of arrogance and the use of guns to wake them up have traumatized the children," he said.

Mondragon said they were initially told the raid was done to verify intelligence reports about bombs and firearms being kept in the summer camp. Later, the soldiers reasoned out that the raid was in connection with reports about the presence of New People's Army rebels in the area.

He said it was the first time such an incident happened to participants of the youth camp, an annual activity aimed at helping abused children live normal lives.

Mondragon said that in the youth camp, abused children were taught leadership skills aside from psychosocial therapy sessions and lectures about their rights.

This year's activity started on May 21 and ended yesterday.

"We are worried of the trauma the incident brought to the children," he said.

Mondragon said the Kabataan Consortium was contemplating the filing of a case against the soldiers.

But Col. Rodolfo del Rosario, commander of the 73rd IB, welcomed the filing of charges but maintained his soldiers did nothing wrong.

Del Rosario also refused to call it a raid, saying it was properly done.

"The PNP and the Army were just trying to verify reports that the police have received that there are alleged terrorists in the vicinity," he said.

He instead chided Mondragon's group for failing to inform authorities about the conduct of the youth camp.

"It appears they do not want anybody to know about it," Del Rosario told Radio Mindanao Network here.

PDI Mindanao Bureau

Prosecutors junk Baguio pyramiding case

BAGUIO CITY—The city prosecutor's office here dismissed the cases filed by 145 investors against the owner of a cellular phone card trading firm, saying the firm was not engaged in a pyramiding scheme.

The decision, which was issued on April 24, said there was no factual basis to convince the prosecutors that the respondent, Esteban Guerrero, owner of Line Card Investment and Trading Inc., was engaged in a pyramiding activity.

Some of the complainants were disappointed when they learned of the dismissal of the suits.

"We only wanted to recover our capital, not anymore the earnings promised by Line Card's marketing scheme," they said.

A three-member committee on pyramiding cases created by the Office of the City Prosecutor said "not one of the complainants ever claimed to have been personally recruited or talked into investing by (Guerrero) himself."

"None ever mentioned who recruited whom, when did he invest and at what level in the company's marketing scheme he got in—the data that will prove that the alleged pyramiding scheme of Line Card was actually put into effect," a resolution of the committee said.

It added that "there was no allegation as to whether (Guerrero) was acting all by himself or he had partners who conspired with him."

"Consequently, there is no factual basis to convince that there was a pyramiding activity engaged in by (Guerrero). Likewise, there is lack of factual basis to show there was syndicated estafa, which requires the participation of at least five principals. Neither can it be said that simple estafa was made out because not one of the complainants claimed to have been personally misled by Guerrero," the decision said.

Jette Dumpayan, Contributor

PCGG to inventory Imelda estate in Leyte town

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—The Presidential Commission on Good Government will conduct an inventory of the sequestered Olot Estate in Tolosa town, Leyte.

Renoir Dauag, PCGG regional representative, said the inventory was necessary so his office could determine if there were items missing in the property.

He said they would run after former first lady Imelda Romualdez-Marcos if the inventory would show that some items had disappeared.

As a sequestered property, Mrs. Marcos is not allowed to take anything from the Olot Estate, which is considered by the former first lady as her "ancestral home."

The inventory, which will start today, will last for a week and will be supervised by a representative of the Commission on Audit (COA) in Eastern Visayas.

The PCGG had conducted two inventories of the property. The first was in 1986 when the government sequestered the property shortly after the Marcoses were removed from power through People Power.

During that time, a catalogue was made where all items found in the estate were identified and itemized. A second inventory was made in early 2002.

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Bank execs see 1 gang in spate of heists

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Four armed robberies that hit branches of the Land Bank of the Philippines in the Cordillera were executed by a single group, bank officials said here on Thursday.

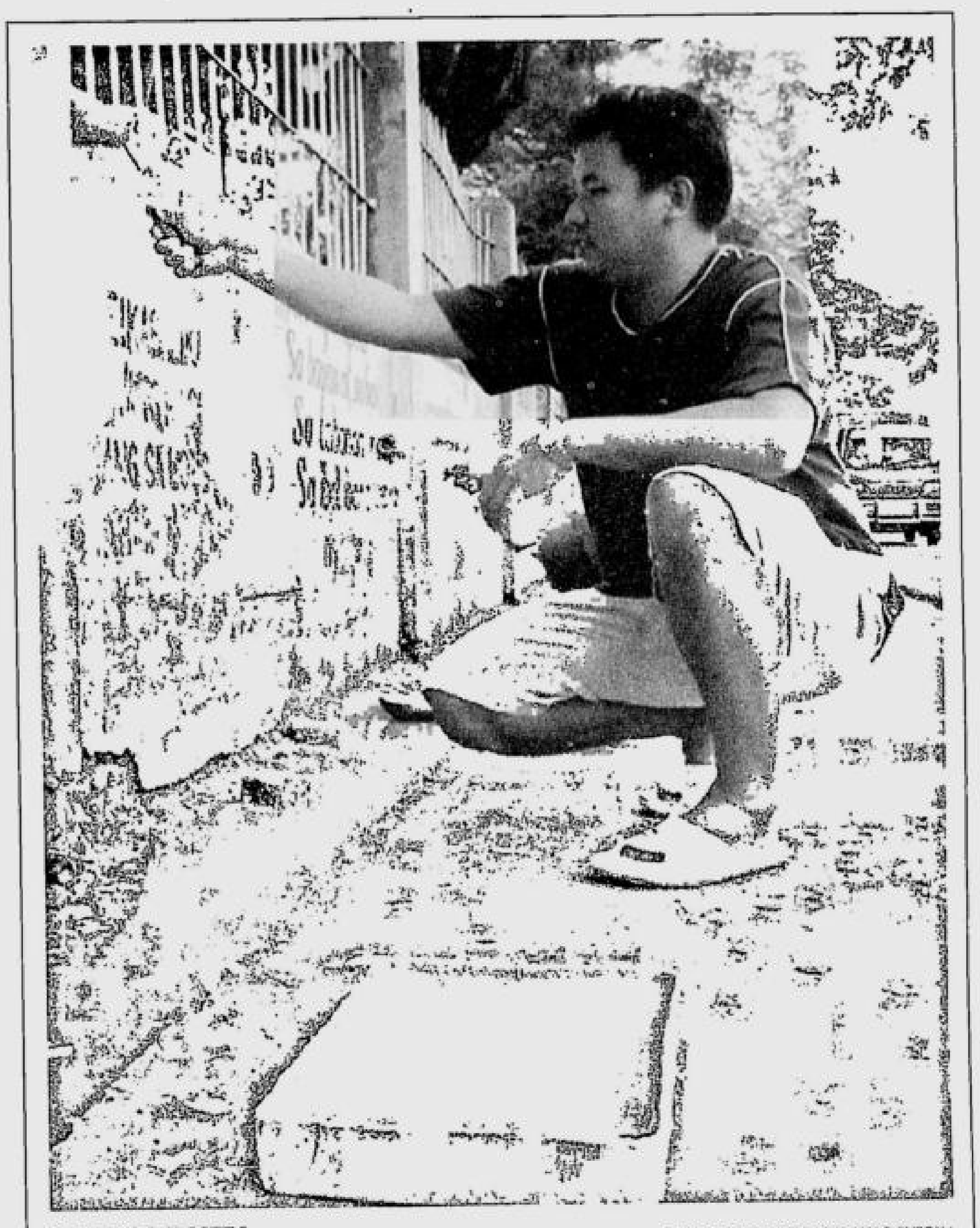
The robberies, including the March 26 attack on a Land Bank vehicle carrying cash bound for the bank's branch in Bontoc, Mt. Province, have alarmed bank officials because these "could discourage depositors," said Margarito Teves, Land Bank president.

In the latest heist, six hooded men intercepted in Lagawe, Mt. Province, a Tamaraw FX ferrying an LBP teller who was carrying P15 million in cash.

The men took away two sacks of money from the teller, threw the driver and two bank guards out of the vehicle, and fled with the vehicle.

They sped toward the border of Ifugao and Benguet, where they torched the vehicle.

None of the robbery cases had been solved, although the police had recovered half of the P8 million lost in the Lagawe robbery, according to bank officials.



SCHOOL DUTY

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

A volunteer parent starts the paint job on the fence of the Kapitan Tomas Monteverde Elementary School in Davao City which was filled with official grafitti in preparation for the coming opening of classes.

Iloilo groups hold protest rally against House's style of Cha-cha

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr., *PDI Visayas Bureau*

ILOILO CITY—About 150 members of a multi-sectoral group on Thursday held a rally to dramatize their opposition to the proposal to hold a constituent assembly to amend the 1987 Constitution.

A caravan of 15 vehicles, passed through the main streets of the city before converging on the grounds of the Rotary Amphitheater for a protest rally.

The protest action was led by the Ilonggo Anti-ConAss Task Force (I-Act), a loose coalition of student groups, religious organizations, non-government groups and academic institutions.

Other organizations that joined the rally included the Citizen's Movement for a Federal Philippines, Iloilo People's Habitat Foundation, Sanlakas, Green Forum, Iloilo Network of Non-Government Organizations and Iloilo Federation of Community Associations.

The various organizations are pushing for the holding of a constitutional convention instead of a constituent assembly in changing provisions of the Constitution.

The protest action was among the activities planned by the members of the coalition during a forum held at the University of San Agustin on May 14.

They signed a statement against House Concurrent Resolution No. 16, which sought to convene Congress into a constituent assembly.

The resolution is being deliberated by the Senate committee on constitutional amendments.

The various groups under I-Act earlier launched a signature campaign in schools, offices and communities.

"At this very critical stage, we cannot remain complacent. It is urgent that we express our opposition to the formation of a highly partisan and self-serving constituent assembly," according to the statement distributed by the protesters.

The I-Act said a constitutional convention is in line with the constitutional provision that "sovereignty resides in the people and all government authority emanates from them."

The coalition also denounced reported threats made by the group identified with Speaker Jose de Venecia to take control of the Senate leadership if the proposal to hold a constituent assembly would not pass in the Senate.

City prepares bid for longest 'longganiza'

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—After making the world's biggest kaleidoscopic lantern last year, this city is presenting the longest longganiza (native sausage) in the country on the 249th founding anniversary of this Pampanga capital on May 29.

Mayor Reynaldo Aquino said the longganiza, packed with sweetened ground meat and stuffed in sun-dried and clean pig intestines, would span 1.5 kilometers (1,588 meters) long.

All 35 barangays in the city are bringing out their dining tables and lay out a feast of steaming rice, ripe tomatoes and, of course, the giant longganiza, Aquino said.

Banquet tables will encircle the town center with City Hall as starting and finish lines.

"We really want to have a festive mood on the eve of the 250th anniversary of San Fernando," Aquino said.

He said the city government was not yet aspiring to beat the Guinness holder of the world's longest sausage, which spanned 59.14 kilometers in Sheffield, South York, United Kingdom from Oct. 27 to 29, 2000.

Aquino said the distance is similar to the Manila-Apalit (Pampanga) stretch. "Definitely, we cannot break that record now," he said.

Pampanga's Best, one of the leading meat products makers in the province, is helping the city government attain the feat.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Rob suspect gunned down as he steps out of jail

DAVAO CITY—Suspected members of the so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS), a vigilante group, gunned down a suspected felon here on Friday afternoon.

Police said Edgar Villegas, 38, a resident of San Nicolas, Barangay Centro in Agdao District, had just stepped out of prison when he was killed.

Based on reports reaching the Sta. Ana police station here, Villegas, a blacksmith, and his brother-in-law Cris Gahum, were standing by the roadside in Agdao around 5 p.m. when three men on board a DT Yamaha 125 motorcycle without a license plate arrived.

Two of the suspects then pulled their guns and opened fire at the victim.

Villegas was hit in various parts of the body, but survived the initial volley of fire and tried to run away. But the suspects followed him and continued firing at him, hitting him in the body.

When the suspects left, bystanders rushed Villegas to the Medical Mission Hospital, where physicians declared him dead on arrival.

Villegas, owner of the Matvel Blacksmith, had earlier been arrested on robbery charges but the City Prosecutor's Office released him after police failed to come up with evidence to pin him down on the charges.

Several days ago, police authorities also recovered the bodies of two men who had been summarily executed also believed to be by the same vigilante group. One of the victims was even set on fire.

Residents said the DDS was apparently hot on the trail of suspected criminals again after a lull of nearly a year in its summary executions and gangland-style killings.

By end of 2001, the suspected vigilante group had killed at least 21 people, most of them having had brushes with the law on several occasions.

Most of the victims had been suspected of involvement in the drug trade.

But Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said the DDS does not exist and that the killings could be linked to squabbles between criminals.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Bohol jail scam probe endorsed

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—The Bohol provincial board has endorsed to the Departments of Justice and of Interior and Local Government and the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas for investigation a letter listing irregularities allegedly committed by the management of the Bohol Detention and Rehabilitation Center (BDRC).

The provincial board's peace and order committee also required acting jail warden Juanario Item and key BDRC personnel to comment on the allegations.

The letter writers said they chose to keep their identities secret for fear of their lives.

The letter revealed that the provincial government is allocating P30 per day per inmate, and with 250 prisoners the BDRC receives P7,500 daily.

The letter, however, alleged that, only P4,950 per day actually goes to food. Of the P7,500 daily total allocation, P1,000 allegedly goes to the warden, P500 to the "bosyo" (boss among inmates), P200 each to the "assistant bosyo," supply officer, inmate purchaser, general services office checker and the provincial accountant's office checker.

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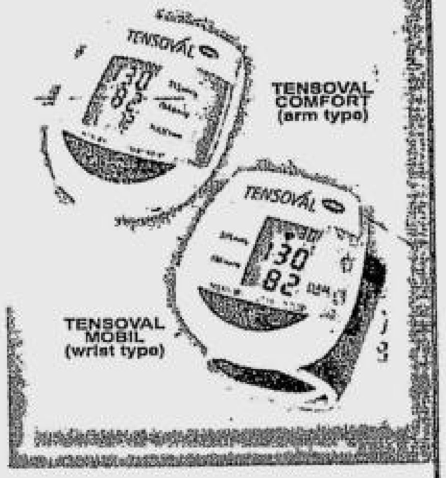

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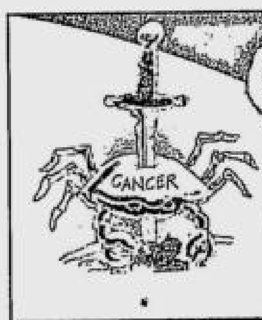

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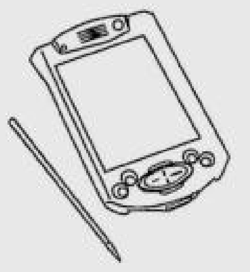

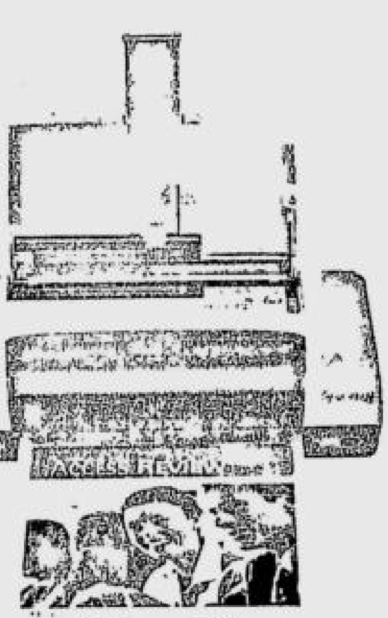

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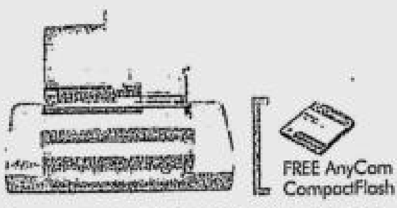
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'SPOTTERS'

Davao sees new tack vs terror

By Dennis Jay Santos
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Though not wanting to cause alarm and panic, the military's Task Force Davao said reports of terror attacks in the city comes in almost every hour of the day and these cannot be ignored.

"The possibility of another terror attack in Davao City cannot be discounted," Col. Gaudencio Pangilinan, chief of the Task Force Davao, said.

But Pangilinan said a lot of the reports turned out to be duds.

After the bombings in the city in March and last month, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte cautioned Davao residents to brace for more attacks, saying he himself found it hard to sleep at night.

He said the "enemies" would not rest.

In a bid to avert future terror attacks, the task force drew up a new approach to security and counter-terrorism measures that will include tapping some 1,500 so-called "spotters." A spotter could be any person be it policeman, soldier, ice cream vendor, driver, student, shoe shine boy or just about anybody on the streets.

Pangilinan said they patterned the method on that of London, where it took a decade for authorities to perfect the system after Great Britain was beset with bombings.

Pangilinan said the system is quite "ambitious," but they will take no chances and will introduce measures to combat terrorism.

"We need to apply immediate measures to at least lower the impact (sic) of a possible attack," he said.

He added that spotters would be tasked with reporting to authorities any possible terror activity.

The job would include getting the personal background of visitors in the city who check in and out of hotels.

"A spotter will observe suspicious persons, activities, vehicles or packages," he said.

With spotters, it will be harder for would-be bombers to launch attacks, he added.

A waiting shed outside the Davao City airport and a wharf in the city were recently bombed killing several persons and wounding hundreds.

DOMESTIC CHORES
PHOTO FROM OVP
Vice President Teofisto Guingona is left to fend the store during President Macapagal-Arroyo's trip to the United States. He visits an evacuation camp in Lanao del Norte with Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman to distribute relief goods.

If we want to reduce chemical pesticide use in corn crops and our corn grain products to be free from aflatoxin, we must plant Bt corn.

THE TRUTH BEHIND THE BT CORN ISSUE

What is Bt corn?

Bt corn is genetically modified corn incorporated with protein from a naturally occurring soil microorganism (Bt) that gives the crop built-in protection from corn borers. When a corn borer eats Bt, a digestive enzyme converts the protein into a toxic form, which damages the corn borer's digestive system, causing it to die.

What is Bt?

Bacillus thuringiensis, or Bt, is a bacterium that occurs naturally in soil. For over 40 years now, the Bt protein has been used safely as an organic insect control agent. It is widely available as an insecticidal spray, commonly used by home gardeners and organic farmers to control a variety of insects. As a matter of fact, Benguet organic and vegetable farmers have been using Bt under the brand names Dipel and Thuricide for this purpose since the 1980s.

Bt poses no health risk to the user or consumer (it is non-allergenic and non-toxic), and it kills only a specific insect group. Humans, other mammals, birds, fish and most desirable insects are not affected by Bt because their digestive systems do not produce the enzymes required to activate the Bt protein.

Why was Bt corn developed?

Infestation by corn borers can reduce yields by as much as forty percent or more, adversely affecting the livelihood of farmers. Damaged corn grains are not only of poor quality, they are also likely to be contaminated with liver-cancer causing aflatoxin produced by molds that attack injured corn grains. Until the introduction of Bt corn, the only effective way to control corn borer infestation is the use of expensive pesticides that, when improperly used, can have adverse effects on the health of farmers and can kill even non-targeted insects. Bt corn was developed mainly to control the corn borer, and thus improve yield for farmers. Also, the use of expensive pesticides is greatly reduced. Field tests conducted in the Philippines confirm that planting Bt corn resulted in higher yield due to reduced losses from insect damage and lower production cost.

How widely used is Bt corn now?

Since 1996, almost 44 million hectares of land have been planted globally with Bt corn. Millions of tons of Bt corn have also been incorporated into our food products with no scientifically proven report of adverse effects on human health and damage to the environment. The risks of cross-pollination and insect-resistance build-up have also been effectively managed.

How safe is Bt corn?

Unlike conventionally bred crops that are regarded safe because they have been consumed for a long time, genetically modified crops now in the market have undergone years of rigorous science-based safety assessment. They have been scientifically proven to be substantially equivalent to their conventional counterparts and are considered as safe for consumption.

In the Philippines, all concerned regulatory agencies have thoroughly studied the issues related to the commercial use of Bt corn and have concluded that the risks, if any, could be managed under Philippine conditions.

The United States, Canada, Argentina, South Africa, Australia, Japan, Korea, Switzerland, and the European Union have approved Bt corn for food and feed and have confirmed the safety of the product.

All scare stories about Bt corn have been reviewed and found not supported by sound scientific practice and good evidence. In spite of the scare tactics of anti-GMO groups, a total of 168 countries imported corn in 2000, 85% of which came from countries growing Bt corn. These countries have not reported any ill effects on human health and on the environment.

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Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization, Inc. (Philfoodex)

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Senate probe of RP loss of islands urged

By Michael Lim Ubac

SEN. Manuel Villar has urged the Senate to investigate the loss arising from the neglect to assert Philippine sovereignty over three tiny isolated islands in the country's southernmost tip which are now apparently under the control of Indonesia.

Villar, who heads the Senate foreign relations committee, claims that the islands of Palmas, Marore and Merampit—situated near the Sarangani group of islets off Davao del Sur in southern Mindanao—belong to the Philippines.

Compared to the islands in the Spratly group in the South China Sea, which are being claimed by six East Asian countries, including the Philippines, the three tiny islands are being claimed only by Indonesia.

In fact, according to the official web page of Indonesia's North Sulawesi Tourism Promotion Board, Miangas (Palmas) and Nanusa were two of the 77 islands forming the Sangihe Talaud chain of islands stretching north from Sulawesi in the direction of the Philippines.

Marore has been identified in the Jakarta Post newspaper reports as also part of the Sangihe and Talaud group of islands.

The tourism board said the islands, off the northernmost coast of North Sulawesi, appear to form a kind of bridge with the southernmost islands of the Philippines.

Villar on Friday asked the Senate to probe the loss of the islands which he appears to blame on certain unnamed government officials. Earlier, Rep. Imee Marcos made similar claims about the three islands in the House.

Villar said the islands had strategic, political and economic importance to the country. "The islands (are) a critical spawning area and migration corridor of highly migratory fish species like the yellow fin tuna," he said.

"The area has also been tagged as a large marine ecosystem with vital environmental importance," he added.

Villar cited sociologists and experts in international law as saying the Philippines' continuous administrative control of the three tiny islands was well-grounded.

He said Palmas Island, which is only 47 nautical miles east-northeast of Sarangani island, "lies within the boundaries of the Philippines as defined by the 1898 Treaty of Paris" under which Spain ceded what is now the Philippines to the United States.

No quorum in House? Fiesta time for solons

MARCOS

From page A1

Norte Rep. Imee Marcos paraded in this city's streets on Saturday as Reyna Emperatriz in the annual Santacruzan festival.

Marcos said she found the rites a wonderful respite from the lack of quorum in Congress.

Clad in an old *terno* of her mother's, Marcos—reported to be seeking a seat in the Senate—was escorted by Mayor Agustin Perdices. "She's beautiful!" a gay member of the audience gushed.

Marcos said she was only too happy to take part in a Filipino tradition like the Santacruzan.

In a press briefing, she did not categorically answer questions about her Senate plans, but Negros Oriental Representatives Herminio Teves and Emilio Macias II said Marcos had the qualities of a good senator.

Marcos only expressed her concern over the lack of a quorum in the House of Representatives. She said there were still many bills that have not been acted upon.

"Terrorism is still not a crime in the Philippines until today," she noted, referring to the anti-terror bill still pending in Congress.

Where are the congressmen? Many of them are already out campaigning for reelection, volunteered Teves. "We, however, expect a quorum every 15th of the month," he quipped.

"The usual excuse among congressmen," Marcos noted, "is that this is fiesta season and they all have to go to their districts."

Another reason for the absence of some congressmen, she said, was that they may be sulking over the withholding of their pork barrel.

"But this group before you is present, not only here in Dumaguete but also in Manila," Marcos said, also speaking in behalf of Macias and Teves.

The floral procession included appearances by teenage idols Brad Turvey, Carlo Muñoz, Lorenz Mumar, Paolo Contis and Carlo Maceda.

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By: Rodelio T. Dascil, Esq.
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- With forewords and endorsements from Senators Ramon B. Magsaysay, Jr. and Francis N. Pangilinan

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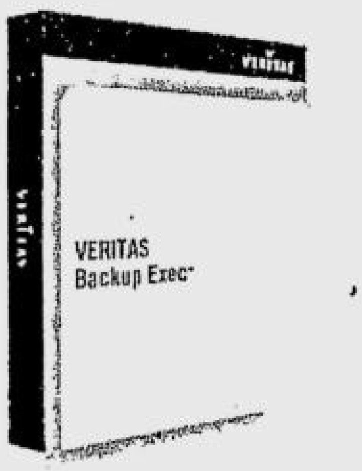

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28 killed, 44 missing in sea collision

From page A1

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"The MV San Nicolas passengers and their relatives will be attended to by the WG&A passage team at the Eva Macapagal Super Terminal at Pier 15, South Harbor Manila," the company said.

Passengers and relatives may contact the Super Ferry hotline 02-5287000 for further information.

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FOUR-YEAR-OLD Art Vincent Chua, one of the rescued passengers of the MV San Nicolas, arrives at the Coast Guard headquarters. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

'Call the Coast Guard, we are sinking'

By Luige del Puerto

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Tiglao says only 3,500 evacuees, not 318,000

From page A1

number of civilians who have been in and out of evacuation centers since the start of the year.

"It's very sad. Senator Pimentel is totally misinformed," Tiglao said in a phone interview yesterday.

"It's not (true that) 350,000 people (were) affected by punitive actions that started last week. It's only 3,500 people," he said.

Pimentel said that nongovernment organizations had supplied him the information, but added that even government agencies had much higher estimates than Tiglao. The other day, Vice President Teofisto Guingona paid a surprise visit to the evacuation center in Munai, Lanao del Norte, which alone was said to house at least 7,300 civilians.

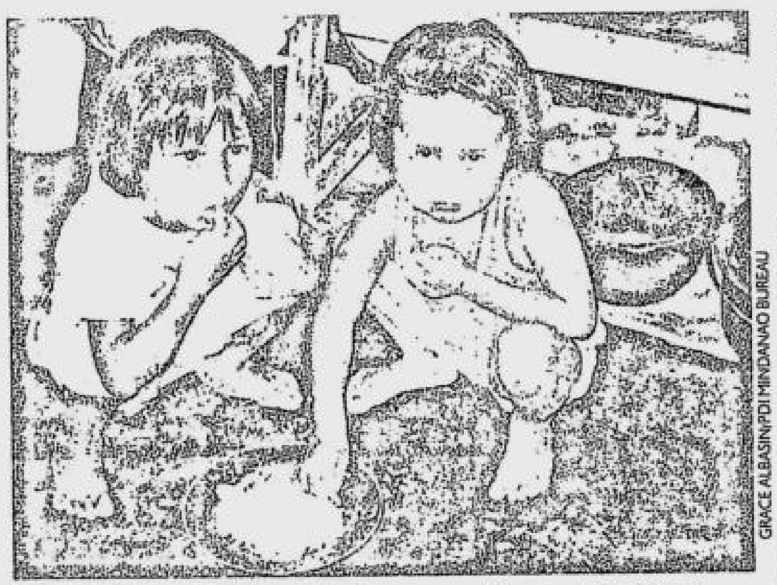
Last week, the official evacuee count of the Department of Social Welfare and Development in Northern Mindanao stood at 3,243 families, or a total of 18,891 people displaced by the military action.

Tiglao said Pimentel might have been referring to the cumulative number of evacuees who have gone "in and out" of evacuation centers in Mindanao since the start of the year.

He said this would include evacuation centers in Sulu, where residents fled whenever Abu Sayyaf bandits were on the move, but returned to their homes once the bandits had passed, as well as places where residents fled their homes whenever they saw a massing of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) troops.

But since the start of the latest punitive action against the MILF last week, Tiglao said the government had recorded about 3,500 civilian evacuees.

The figure includes those who got relief supplies from the DSWD centers but returned to their homes immediately, he said.



GRACE ALBASIN/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

CHILDREN share a plate of rice in an evacuation center in Munai.

"Maybe Pimentel just made a mistake," Tiglao added in Filipino.

Guingona, administering the oath of allegiance to 97 MILF rebels who surrendered in Iligan City last Thursday, asked the rebel returnees to never go back to the secessionist group.

He said government should provide the former rebels with livelihood opportunities to keep them within the fold of the law.

"We don't just want to attain peace. We have to have a meaningful and competent peace. (The government has) to know how they (the ex-rebels) can contribute to society," Guingona said.

The Vice President said he did not want a repeat of the past, where returnees ended up back in the hinterlands, after they failed to start a new life as law-abiding citizens.

"I congratulated them for their decision. But they must have something to keep them from the sad experience of having to go back to the underground because of poverty," Guingona told the INQUIRER.

Also on Thursday, Guingona assured thousands of civilians displaced by intensified anti-terrorist military operations in Lanao del Norte that there would be no letup in the national government's delivery of relief assistance.

"This is especially for women and children, along with the sick and elderly. (This relief will be provided) while our troops do their best to contain the threats to peace and order," Guingona said.

The Vice President distributed food packages and other relief items together with Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman and Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes.

Guingona later joined the soldiers of the 401st Infantry Battalian in a lunch of boiled rice, vegetables and sardines before flying by helicopter to Iligan City.

Stop operations

Pimentel last week called for a halt to the "large-scale military operations" in Mindanao, saying as many as 318,000 civilians had been displaced.

The senator said the President should call off the operations since they had already accomplished their purpose, which was to impress Washington that she was tough on terrorists.

Tiglao took exception to this.

"It's quite sad for a Mindanaoan like the good Senator Pimentel to impute such motives, for a President who's very concerned about Mindanao now," he said.

He said the President would be in Mindanao today and on Tuesday to attend to the problem of terrorism.

"She likes to see what's happening there, how she can push the development projects there," he said.

Tiglao nevertheless signaled that the President would lift the operations today during her command conference with the military and police in Cagayan De Oro City.

Tiglao said the campaign had been "essentially successful," with 77 "terrorists" reported killed, and with some MILF commanders offering to surrender. He did not identify the rebel leaders.

"We're getting practically a flood of surrender feelers now. The mission of the punitive action has been essentially successful," said Tiglao.

He said the military had captured the areas "where these embedded (terrorist) cells are located, where they mass, where they replenish their supplies."

Anti-war advocates yesterday asked Islamic foreign ministers to conduct an "all-Muslim fact finding mission" in the country to find out why the peace negotiations between the government and the MILF had bogged down.

The Pamalakaya fisherfolk group made the call after the influential Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) invited Foreign Secretary Blas Ople to the meeting of Islamic foreign ministers in Tehran, Iran on May 28 to 31. *With a report from Gerald Lacuarta*

STOP SARS ATTACK

DOH OFFICIAL ADVISORY

MONDAY 26 May 2003

Observe self-quarantine, teachers/students from SARS countries advised

The Departments of Health (DOH) and Education (DepEd) advised teachers and students who have travelled to countries with known Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) cases and who are going back to school this year to observe a 14-day self-quarantine period.

"During this period, their body temperature should be taken twice daily and symptoms of sore throat, cough, shortness of breath and difficulty of breathing should be watched out for", DOH Officer-in-Charge and Undersecretary of Health Dr. Antonio Lopez said.

The joint advisory came in anticipation of the opening of classes in June. The advisory is meant for schools that cater to foreign nationals, teachers or students, and schools that have teachers or students who have travelled outside the country this year for study tours or vacations in countries where there are reported SARS case.

"When high fever is noted within the quarantine period, they should go to the nearest SARS referral hospital for appropriate action", Lopez advised.

"These safety measures are being undertaken to prevent local transmission of SARS from students and teachers who may have been expose to the virus while abroad", Lopez concluded.

Question.	Answer.
I am an ordinary citizen with an ordinary life. What can I do to help in controlling the spread of SARS?	Everyone has a responsibility to control SARS in the country. Here are some suggestions:

Reported SARS cases in the Country
(March 17 - May 25 2003)

SARS suspects:
total cumulative admission
total discharged
presently admitted (May 23, 2003)
SARS cases
SARS deaths
SARS Recovered/Cured

* Listen and believe only on official announcements or advisories given by the government. Don't spread unconfirmed reports or rumors.

* Avoid panic-buying of surgical masks, germ cleaning agents and others. This will only cause prices to go up and supplies unnecessarily run out. Only health professionals attending SARS patients and the patients themselves are required to wear masks. The use of masks for the general population is not recommended.

* Postpone your trips to SARS-affected areas.

* And build your body's resistance through exercise, healthy diet, adequate sleep and no smoking.

SARS HOTLINES: 741-7048 / 743-1937 or Type MED<space>SARS then send to 2333 for Globe subscribers or 257 for Smart users or text HOTLINE SARS <space> (Message) then send to 2960 or EMAIL: sars@doh.gov.ph

MILF bomb expert, Egyptian arrested

From page A1

An Indonesian, Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, confessed to Manila police last year that Yunos had helped him carry out the Rizal Day bombings in Manila. Al-Ghozi was arrested in Manila in January last year and subsequently sentenced to a 17-year jail term for illegal possession of explosives.

Officials claim al-Ghozi is a bomb expert from Jemaah Islamiah, blamed for the October bombings in Bali that left more than 200 dead.

Stretcher

Authorities grew suspicious when Yunos presented "questionable" medical documents at the airport about his supposed wounds, a source in Camp Aguinaldo, the military headquarters in Quezon City, said.

But another source from the military intelligence service in Cagayan de Oro said Yunos and Algabri had been under surveillance for quite sometime. "They have been under surveillance until we found a safe place where we were able to trap them," the source said.

Algabri accompanied Yunus, who was on a stretcher. They were scheduled to leave for Manila at around 7:30 a.m.

At the check-in counter, Algabri allegedly became unruly after a PAL supervisor rejected his request that Yunus be seated next to him.

"So the PAL supervisor called the attention of the airport police. They pacified Algabri and told him they could board the next flight out," the source said.

But a few minutes later, the airport police received a call from Chief Supt. Jesus Versoza, acting director of the Philippine National Police Intelligence Group, who asked them to hold Algabri and Yunus. The duo was brought to Manila at around 3:30 p.m.

Algabri, 50, has been living in the Philippines for the last 15 years. He has two wives, one of whom is a Christian.

Algabri, who is fluent in Filipino and Bisaya, was reportedly facilitating various social projects funded by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). But the military and the police suspected him of being an operative of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network because of his contacts with the MILF.

The arrest came amid the military's intensified monitoring of suspected terrorists, including 10 Indonesians and two Pakistanis.

Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko, Southern Command chief, said he was optimistic that the military's hunt for the Jemaah Islamiah's so-called Dirty Dozen would be as successful as the "selective bombing" of "terrorist cells" in Mindanao.

Last year, the police and military intelligence community hunted down Yunos and his accomplices, including at least two Indonesians, who were believed to be responsible for the series of bombings in Zamboanga City and Metro Manila.

Authorities identified Yunos as the head of the Special Operations Group of the Third Division of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, a unit of the MILF.

Sightings

A source in the military said last year that Yunos, al-Ghozi and Riduan Isamuddin, alias Hambali, leader of the Jemaah Islamiah in Malaysia, had met at one of the training camps in Afghanistan. Hambali was sighted in Mindanao in 2000 and again last year.

"Yunos was responsible for bringing al-Ghozi to train at Camp Abubakar, then the stronghold of the MILF, in 1996," the source said. Yunos also facilitated al-Ghozi's other visits to Camp Abubakar where he trained in military warfare. *With a report from AFP*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

28 killed, 44 missing in sea collision

From page A1

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From page A1

number of civilians who have been in and out of evacuation centers since the start of the year.

"It's very sad. Senator Pimentel is totally misinformed," Tiglao said in a phone interview yesterday.

"It's not (true that) 350,000 people (were) affected by punitive actions that started last week. It's only 3,500 people," he said.

Pimentel said that nongovernment organizations had supplied him the information, but added that even government agencies had much higher estimates than Tiglao. The other day, Vice President Teofisto Guingona paid a surprise visit to the evacuation center in Munai, Lanao del Norte, which alone was said to house at least 7,300 civilians.

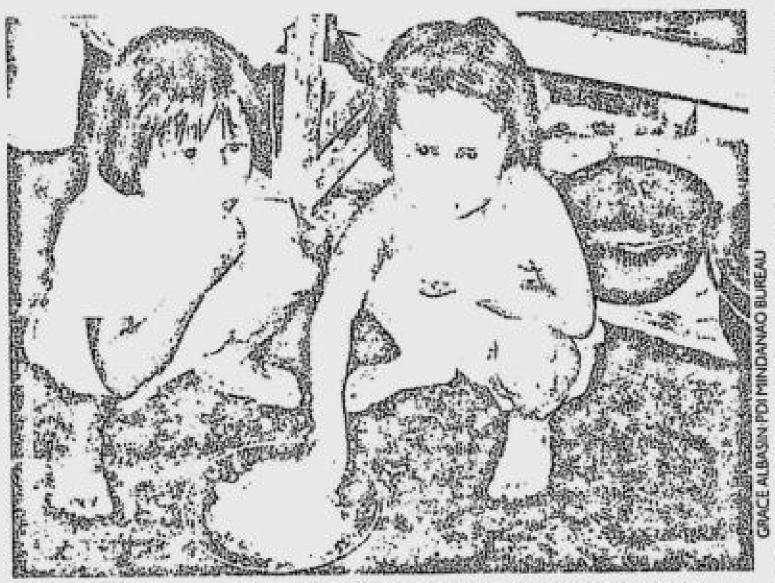
Last week, the official evacuee count of the Department of Social Welfare and Development in Northern Mindanao stood at 3,243 families, or a total of 18,891 people displaced by the military action.

Tiglao said Pimentel might have been referring to the cumulative number of evacuees who have gone "in and out" of evacuation centers in Mindanao since the start of the year.

He said this would include evacuation centers in Sulu, where residents fled whenever Abu Sayyaf bandits were on the move, but returned to their homes once the bandits had passed, as well as places where residents fled their homes whenever they saw a massing of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) troops.

But since the start of the latest punitive action against the MILF last week, Tiglao said the government had recorded about 3,500 civilian evacuees.

The figure includes those who got relief supplies from the DSWD centers but returned to their homes immediately, he said.



GRACE ALBASIN/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

CHILDREN share a plate of rice in an evacuation center in Munai.

"Maybe Pimentel just made a mistake," Tiglao added in Filipino.

Guingona, administering the oath of allegiance to 97 MILF rebels who surrendered in Iligan City last Thursday, asked the rebel returnees to never go back to the secessionist group.

He said government should provide the former rebels with livelihood opportunities to keep them within the fold of the law.

"We don't just want to attain peace. We have to have a meaningful and competent peace. (The government has) to know how they (the ex-rebels) can contribute to society," Guingona said.

The Vice President said he did not want a repeat of the past, where returnees ended up back in the hinterlands, after they failed to start a new life as law-abiding citizens.

"I congratulated them for their decision. But they must have something to keep them from the sad experience of having to go back to the underground because of poverty," Guingona told the INQUIRER.

Also on Thursday, Guingona assured thousands of civilians displaced by intensified anti-terrorist military operations in Lanao del Norte that there would be no letup in the national government's delivery of relief assistance.

"This is especially for women and children, along with the sick and elderly. (This relief will be provided) while our troops do their best to contain the threats to peace and order," Guingona said.

The Vice President distributed food packages and other relief items together with Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman and Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes.

Guingona later joined the soldiers of the 401st Infantry Battalian in a lunch of boiled rice, vegetables and sardines before flying by helicopter to Iligan City.

Stop operations

Pimentel last week called for a halt to the "large-scale military operations" in Mindanao, saying as many as 318,000 civilians had been displaced.

The senator said the President should call off the operations since they had already accomplished their purpose, which was to impress Washington that she was tough on terrorists.

Tiglao took exception to this.

"It's quite sad for a Mindanaoan like the good Senator Pimentel to impute such motives, for a President who's very concerned about Mindanao now," he said.

He said the President would be in Mindanao today and on Tuesday to attend to the problem of terrorism.

"She likes to see what's happening there, how she can push the development projects there," he said.

Tiglao nevertheless signaled that the President would lift the operations today during her command conference with the military and police in Cagayan De Oro City.

Tiglao said the campaign had been "essentially successful," with 77 "terrorists" reported killed, and with some MILF commanders offering to surrender. He did not identify the rebel leaders.

"We're getting practically a flood of surrender feelers now. The mission of the punitive action has been essentially successful," said Tiglao.

He said the military had captured the areas "where these embedded (terrorist) cells are located, where they mass, where they replenish their supplies."

Anti-war advocates yesterday asked Islamic foreign ministers to conduct an "all-Muslim fact finding mission" in the country to find out why the peace negotiations between the government and the MILF had bogged down.

The Pamalakaya fisherfolk group made the call after the influential Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) invited Foreign Secretary Blas Ople to the meeting of Islamic foreign ministers in Tehran, Iran on May 28 to 31. *With a report from Gerald Lacuarta*

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DOH OFFICIAL ADVISORY

MONDAY 26 May 2003

Observe self-quarantine, teachers/students from SARS countries advised

The Departments of Health (DOH) and Education (DepEd) advised teachers and students who have travelled to countries with known Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) cases and who are going back to school this year to observe a 14-day self-quarantine period.

"During this period, their body temperature should be taken twice daily and symptoms of sore throat, cough, shortness of breath and difficulty of breathing should be watched out for", DOH Officer-in-Charge and Undersecretary of Health Dr. Antonio Lopez said.

The joint advisory came in anticipation of the opening of classes in June. The advisory is meant for schools that cater to foreign nationals, teachers or students, and schools that have teachers or students who have travelled outside the country this year for study tours or vacations in countries where there are reported SARS case.

"When high fever is noted within the quarantine period, they should go to the nearest SARS referral hospital for appropriate action", Lopez advised.

"These safety measures are being undertaken to prevent local transmission of SARS from students and teachers who may have been expose to the virus while abroad", Lopez concluded.

Question.	Answer.
I am an ordinary citizen with an ordinary life. What can I do to help in controlling the spread of SARS?	Everyone has a responsibility to control SARS in the country. Here are some suggestions: * Listen and believe only on official announcements or advisories given by the government. Don't spread unconfirmed reports or rumors * Avoid panic-buying of surgical masks, germ cleaning agents and others. This will only cause prices to go up and supplies unnecessarily run out. Only health professionals attending SARS patients and the patients themselves are required to wear masks. The use of masks for the general population is not recommended * Postpone your trips to SARS-affected areas. * And build your body's resistance through exercise, healthy diet, adequate sleep and no smoking.

Reported SARS cases in the Country
(March 17 - May 25 2003)

SARS suspects
total cumulative admission
total discharged
presently admitted (May 23, 2003)
SARS cases
SARS deaths
SARS Recovered/Cured

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MILF bomb expert, Egyptian arrested

From page A1

An Indonesian, Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, confessed to Manila police last year that Yunos had helped him carry out the Rizal Day bombings in Manila. Al-Ghozi was arrested in Manila in January last year and subsequently sentenced to a 17-year jail term for illegal possession of explosives.

Officials claim al-Ghozi is a bomb expert from Jemaah Islamiah, blamed for the October bombings in Bali that left more than 200 dead.

Stretcher

Authorities grew suspicious when Yunos presented "questionable" medical documents at the airport about his supposed wounds, a source in Camp Aguinaldo, the military headquarters in Quezon City, said.

But another source from the military intelligence service in Cagayan de Oro said Yunos and Algabri had been under surveillance for quite sometime. "They have been under surveillance until we found a safe place where we were able to trap them," the source said.

Algabri accompanied Yunus, who was on a stretcher. They were scheduled to leave for Manila at around 7:30 a.m.

At the check-in counter, Algabri allegedly became unruly after a PAL supervisor rejected his request that Yunus be seated next to him.

"So the PAL supervisor called the attention of the airport police. They pacified Algabri and told him they could board the next flight out," the source said.

But a few minutes later, the airport police received a call from Chief Supt. Jesus Versoza, acting director of the Philippine National Police Intelligence Group, who asked them to hold Algabri and Yunus. The duo was brought to Manila at around 3:30 p.m.

Algabri, 50, has been living in the Philippines for the last 15 years. He has two wives, one of whom is a Christian.

Algabri, who is fluent in Filipino and Bisaya, was reportedly facilitating various social projects funded by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). But the military and the police suspected him of being an operative of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network because of his contacts with the MILF.

The arrest came amid the military's intensified monitoring of suspected terrorists, including 10 Indonesians and two Pakistanis.

Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko, Southern Command chief, said he was optimistic that the military's hunt for the Jemaah Islamiah's so-called Dirty Dozen would be as successful as the "selective bombing" of "terrorist cells" in Mindanao.

Last year, the police and military intelligence community hunted down Yunos and his accomplices, including at least two Indonesians, who were believed to be responsible for the series of bombings in Zamboanga City and Metro Manila.

Authorities identified Yunos as the head of the Special Operations Group of the Third Division of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, a unit of the MILF.

Sightings

A source in the military said last year that Yunos, al-Ghozi and Riduan Isamuddin, alias Hambali, leader of the Jemaah Islamiah in Malaysia, had met at one of the training camps in Afghanistan. Hambali was sighted in Mindanao in 2000 and again last year.

"Yunos was responsible for bringing al-Ghozi to train at Camp Abubakar, then the stronghold of the MILF, in 1996," the source said. Yunos also facilitated al-Ghozi's other visits to Camp Abubakar where he trained in military warfare. *With a report from AFP*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Play time too brief for kids, lost dolphin

From page A1

was necessary for them to intervene so the animal could be brought back to the sea.

She said they explained to the children why the dolphin should be released. "Catching, exporting, or even just possessing a dolphin is a violation of the Fisheries Code of the Philippines. That's why the dolphin they're playing with was released that afternoon," she said.

After taking possession of the dolphin, the CAO personnel towed it to the high seas using a speedboat. Descallar said she and the others did not leave the place until a pod of dolphins came and the animal they had just released joined the group.

The children first saw the dolphin at around 2 p.m. on Thursday. It was hungry and weak and had a small wound in the head.

"It was feeding itself with small fishes when the children swam and approached it. Much to their delight, the dolphin did not move, prompting the children to go near it and touch its head, then the rest of its body," Descaller said.

When the children began to swim, the dolphin swam with them and soon they were playing with it.

Dolphins abound in the waters off this city, which faces the Sulu Sea, but it was the first time fishermen saw one of them playing with humans.

They said they found the scene, which lasted for at least two hours, fascinating.

Invitation to an Abundance of returns

METROBANK, the country's largest bank, recently launched its newest trust product called Abundance. Designed for high net worth individuals, this investment opportunity provides an abundance of returns, convenience, and rewards unlike any other.

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The product also promotes the concept of sharing abundant returns. For every Abundance account opened, Metrobank Foundation will donate a hospital cash benefit of P1,000.00/day to an indigent of the client's choice through the SAGIP KA Foundation.

For more information on this product, visit or contact the Metrobank Trust Banking Group at the 18th Floor, GT Tower International, 6813 Ayala Avenue corner H.V. dela Costa Street, Makati City. E-mail at tbg@metrobank.com.ph <mailto: tbg@metrobank.com.,ph> or call 580-9514, 580-9507, 580-9509.

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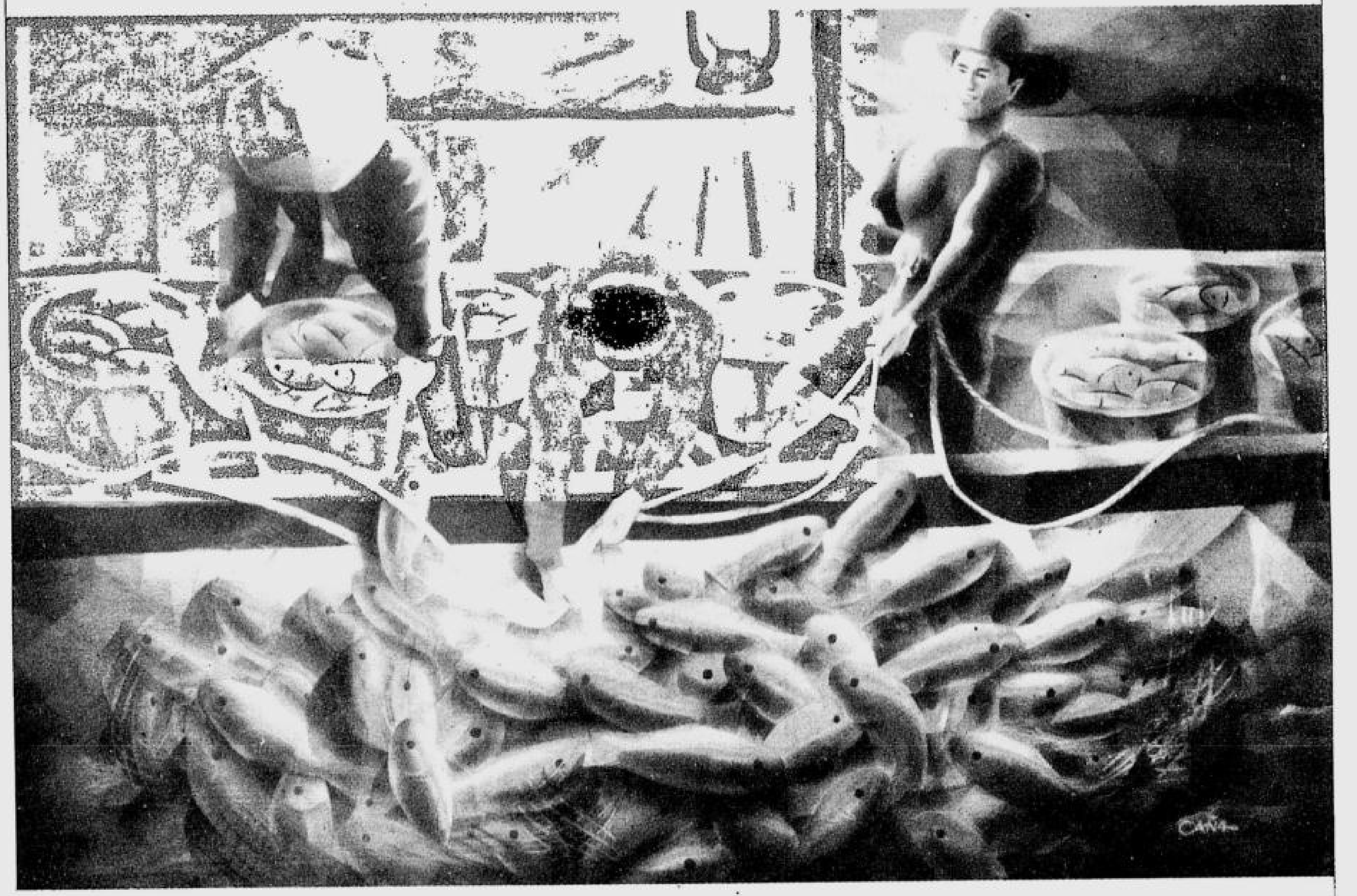

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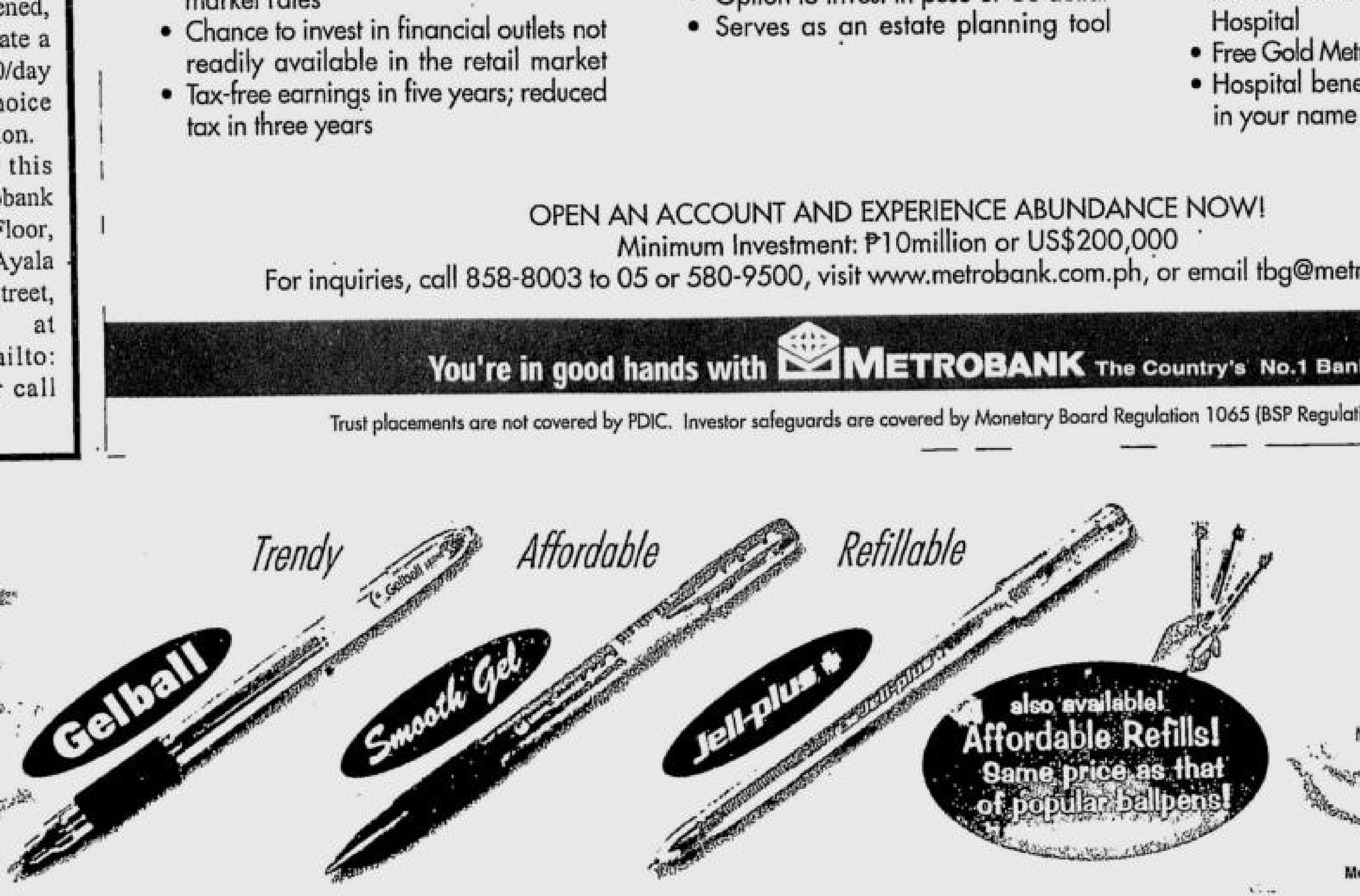

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GMA back with hopes for AFP modernization

From page A1

called.

The US military aid was reduced to a trickle after the Senate closed down the US bases in 1991. Since then, the AFP has had to make do with scarce resources.

Soldiers have struggled on with Vietnam-war vintage weaponry. The Air Force has converted SF-260 trainer planes into attack planes, using dive-bombing tactics reminiscent of World War II.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a former AFP chief of staff, said "the helicopters that we have is only about 10 percent of what I saw when I was a regimental commander," in Mindanao in the 1970s.

For him, the military's priorities are more helicopters for tactical mobility, fast patrol boats to guard the country's maritime borders and improved communications systems.

Joint effort

"I hope that these statements that are now coming out of the two presidents would make this dream a reality," Biazon said.

During Ms Macapagal's meeting with Bush, she obtained a pledge for a new joint military effort to finally crush the Abu Sayyaf, the bandit group Washington has linked to the al-Qaida terror network.

Bush also offered $30 million in new aid for training and equipping the military and gave the Philippines privileged status as a "major non-Nato [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] ally."

This status would give the country priority in receiving excess US military surplus, allow it to stockpile equipment and make it eligible to participate in research and development programs, the US Embassy said.

The Philippines is the first Southeast Asian country to gain this status.

Pichay said he was optimistic the Americans would come through.

"Considering the history of Bush where he really has the political will to do what he wants, and if he considers the threat in the Philippines as part of the al-Qaida network ... then the aid will be given the priority," he said.

He emphasized that the Philippines would not rely only on the United States for its own military modernization program.

Manila has already set aside P5.4 billion ($101.8 million) in a trust fund for military modernization, but the procurement system has proven so slow that the prices of weapons often change before the deal can be sealed.

An ambitious P331-billion, 15-year military modernization program approved in 1996 was put off by the Asian economic crisis that hit a year later.

The AFP is now focusing on a P4.035-billion modernization scheme with more modest targets such as upgrading old armored vehicles and acquiring new diving suits.

Return flight

Ms Macapagal, on board a special Philippine Airlines commercial flight, landed at 1:57 a.m. at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 2.

Only a handful of officials were on hand to greet her: Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, Naia general manager Edgar Manda and US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone.

Manda brought with him airport medical personnel who showed Ms Macapagal their anti-SARS measures.

The President, who has dispensed with the traditional arrival and departure ceremonies since the start of the year, went straight to Malacañang to rest for the entire day.

She will read her arrival speech at 10 a.m. today in the Palace, then fly to Mindanao for an overnight visit.

Presidential Chief of Staff Rigoberto Tiglao said Ms Macapagal did not ask her Cabinet members to welcome her at the airport.

Ms Macapagal was in the United States from May 18 to 24.

Tiglao said the President was advised to rest for a day to recover from jet lag before going to Mindanao.

The President is set to visit South Korea and Japan from June 2 to 6. *AFP, with a report from Dona Pazzibugan*

PRESIDENT Macapagal is welcomed at the Naia by US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone as Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes looks on.

Back to reality of politics in RP

From page A1

This explains why in the joint statements on the state visit in Washington, hefty amounts in military and economic aid were allocated and quantified to finance the Mindanao revival program. The outcome of the Mindanao campaign will also determine whether by December, the President will have delivered visible results and reconsider her decision to withdraw from the 2004 elections.

The law and order problem in Mindanao is larger than the criminality in Metro Manila involving the kidnapping of wealthy Chinese-Filipino businessmen. The Mindanao problem has international dimensions.

Mindanao is the base of Islamic radicalism which has spawned the Abu Sayyaf and other terrorist groups linked to al-Qaida. It is also the furnace of the continuing Moro separatist movement, now spearheaded by the MILF.

Bombings in Mindanao have instant international repercussions. They are broadcast all over the world by international TV and news agencies, while kidnappings in Manila have become commonplace domestic events.

So, no matter how much the administration says the economy is growing—albeit slowly—and better than some Asian economies, investors will hold their money until they are convinced of a long-term prospect for political stability and law and order in this country.

Senate

The second turbulence the President will encounter is in the Senate, the chronic epicenter of instability perched on the precarious majority of the administration coalition in that body.

This fragile hold of the administration was again dramatized by the move of Sen. John Osmeña to reorganize the Senate committees and by implicating the leadership after Sen. Joker Arroyo rebuffed Osmeña's move to have the blue ribbon committee inquire into alleged attempts by administration allies to extort money from Fraport, the German partners of Piatco, in the building of Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Osmeña has nothing more substantial to begin with than tapes of illegally tapped conversation between Fraport officials commenting on the alleged extortion attempts in connection with negotiations over equity for Fraport and Piatco after the Supreme Court cancelled the contracts over the terminal, ruling them null and void.

In modern technology, tapes could be spliced. In any case, there were no voices in the tape of the persons who allegedly tried to extort money from Fraport. Arroyo correctly pointed out that the evidence was not only illegally obtained but was also based on third-hand hearsay.

Osmeña's move illustrates the fragility of the balance of power in the Senate. Additionally, it shows the Senate or senators can be used to give dignity to flimsy allegations while negotiations are under way to determine Piatco's and Fraport's equity in the project which, on evidence, stands out as one of the most corruption-ridden contracts on government projects in recent history.

In this controversy, the administration has to show that it can implement firmly the mandate of the Supreme Court's decision of not only to determine the equity but also to see to it that the terminal will be opened within the next few months.

As it is, Piatco is acting as though it is dictating the terms of the settlement, even though it lost the case in the Supreme Court, and is even recommending who the government official it wants to deal with—Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza. The President will have to show it is her government that is running the country, not Piatco. That's what a strong republic is about.

Piatco should be put in its proper place. The government won the case in the Supreme Court; therefore, it should set the terms of settlement and even take criminal action against Piatco officials over the illegalities found in the contracts.

Alternatively, the Osmeña move to reorganize the Senate is another manifestation of the Senate's bad habit of creating legislative gridlocks, and this provides ammunition to those proposing constitutional change leading, among other ends, to the abolition of the Senate in the course of the shift to the parliamentary system.

Speaker Jose de Venecia, the driver of the constitutional change movement, has found in Osmeña an ally to help push forward the Cha-cha movement.

2004 plan

As the President stepped on Philippine terrain, she would be sailing into the gale velocity winds created by renewed and intensified speculations over whether she was reconsidering her decision not to run in 2004.

The success of her US visit sparked speculations that the windfall she received from Washington would revive her popularity and enhance her chances of winning in 2004.

She will find it difficult to dissipate these speculations, as well as the new Senate imbroglio, will provide distractions from her central focus on Mindanao. Her problem is to avoid being derailed by these distractions and see to it that the US aid package is used effectively within the next 11 months.

The aid contains real disposable resources not available to her under the budget.

If she stays the course and deliver results, the issue of whether she will seek a full term will be decided.

After the euphoria in Washington, welcome to the Philippines where bashing and mindless nitpicking are mistaken for sacred political freedom and democracy.

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No takers, so far, on Binay offer

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE MAKATI City government is looking at skills in foreign languages to increase the city's stake as a business hub.

But employees of city hall and members of the city police have not responded to the challenge.

Even if the University of Makati has offered an 8-week seminars on Mandarin, Fookien and Cantonese, there have been no takers, according to Dean Eliseo Co.

An English proficiency seminar was also offered, and is now being conducted at the same university.

Binay has said the improvement in the language skills of the city's employees bode well for the future of Makati.

The proficiency of employees in various languages "empowers" a city, and aids it in directly linking with other cities abroad and developing business ties, he said.

The international business community, in particular, would benefit from employees who are conversant in foreign languages, especially when foreigners have transactions with city hall personnel or are asking for help or information from police.

Makati has recently been designated by the Department of Tourism as the urban tourism capital of the country.

Aside from the business-related benefits, knowledge of another language also helps in the career development of an employee, said Binay.

RITE OF SUMMER
Before it became fashionable to circumcise newborn boys in hospitals, most pubescent boys, like this one, go through the pain of circumcision, a summer ritual that makes men out of boys. JOAN BONDOC

Bridges to be lighted up

By Jerome Aning

AFTER plazas, parks and streets, Manila's bridges will be the next target of Mayor Lito Atienza's lighting project.

Atienza said eight bridges spanning the Pasig River will be included in the light-up project.

These bridges are Roxas (formerly Del Pan), Jones, MacArthur, Quezon, Ayala, Nagtahan, Zamora and Lambingan.

"Each bridge has a different architecture and would generate its own personality if properly lighted at night," Atienza said.

The lighting project is part of the mayor's Buhayin ang Maynila urban renewal program.

Atienza said he wants the bridges lighted up and renovated to project grandeur, similar to that of San Francisco's Golden Gate, New York's Brooklyn and the Sydney and London bridges.

The current lighting scheme on the bridges is only for guiding motorists and pedestrians and ensuring their security, he added.

Atienza said he hopes the new lighting would stimulate "nightlife" on the Pasig's riverbanks, which would go hand-in-hand with the ongoing Pasig River boardwalk project.

For instance, he said, a beautifully-lit MacArthur Bridge could help revive entertainment and leisure business on Escolta and Muelle dela Banco Nacional streets on the north riverbank, and Muelle del Rio and Liwasang Bonifacio in the south bank.

Color coding in Makati lifted for one week

MAKATI Mayor Jejomar Binay has approved the lifting of the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program in Makati starting today until next Monday, June 2, as part of Makati's week-long celebration of its 333rd Foundation Day.

This morning, a simple ceremony at the City Hall quadrangle will usher in the activities.

On Friday, Ayala Avenue will be closed to vehicular traffic at noon to make way for the Makati Grand Parade at 3 p.m.

On June 1, Makati's Foundation Day will be observed with a community day program at the University of Makati grounds.

Rains won't stop search for Randy

By Agnes Donato

RAIN is not a factor in the search and recovery operations of the Manila Water Co. Inc. for the body of Randy Diaz, 19, who had fallen into a ventilation chamber of the water firm last week, according to Joel Lacsamana, corporate communications director of MWCI.

Lacsamana said in a telephone interview yesterday that rain would not affect their efforts to find Diaz's body.

"The rains we have are scattered anyway. It's not as if the rains haven't stopped for three consecutive days and nights. It's really not a factor in our operations," he said.

Lacsamana added that the frogmen from the Philippine Coast Guard did an "exploratory dive" on Friday night, but they had swam through only 120 meters of the 4-kilometer long pipeline before they surfaced for safety reasons.

The divers only tried to find out how much oxygen supply they would need for the dive and if the nylon cord which they would be tagging to send signals to other crew on land would work, Lacsamana explained.

"We are not rushing them. They are the experts so they decide which set-up is more comfortable for them," he said.

Manila Water officials also said the water company bore more holes into the 1525-mm diameter main line, where Diaz's body is lodged, to provide divers with more entry points.

Lacsamana said more holes will be made near the creeks crossing through the Cubao area where the water level is five to seven meters deep.

"The longer the distance the divers have to swim, the more dangerous it is for them. We have to (bore) more holes so they can back out as fast as possible in case something happens," he explained.

Meanwhile, the MWCI will continue supplying areas affected by the water interruption using tanks, Lacsamana said. These areas are mostly in Quezon City.

Diaz was picking mangoes and had stepped on the cover of a ventilation chamber to get a better view of the fruits last May 17. But the makeshift cover of the ventilation chamber gave way, and Diaz fell into the chamber and was swept away by the strong currents in the aqueduct.

LATE SPORTS

Alaska cager badly hurt in vehicular accident

Aces beat Hotdogs, end losing streak

By June Navarro

GAMES WEDNESDAY
(Philsports Arena)
5 p.m.—Talk N Text vs San Miguel
7:30 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs FedEx

CONE: Del Rosario accidentally slept on the wheel. PDI PHOTO

RICHARD Del Rosario of Alaska broke his left forearm and severely injured his right thigh after the 6-foot-5 forward figured in a vehicular accident Thursday night.

Alaska coach Tim Cone said Del Rosario also suffered several cuts and bruises on his face and body after his Ford Expedition slammed into a cement lamppost a few kilometers from his house in Fort Bonifacio.

Cone said Del Rosario fell asleep while on his way home at around 12 midnight from a fashion show and woke up badly battered and in pain at the Makati Medical Center, where he underwent surgery on his right thigh. The surgery was supervised by Dr. Raul Canlas.

Although there were no internal damages, Cone said Canlas inserted a metal rod on Del Rosario's thigh that would sideline him for at least six months.

"Let me make it clear that Del Rosario met the accident not because he was drunk. He just accidentally slept on the wheel," said Cone.

Meanwhile, Alaska snapped out of six-game losing streak with a 90-85 victory over Purefoods as both teams ended their elimination campaign last night in the Samsung PBA All-Filipino Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

While the Aces advanced to the quarterfinals with a 9-9 record, the Hotdogs took their sixth straight loss and went on an early vacation with a 5-13 slate.

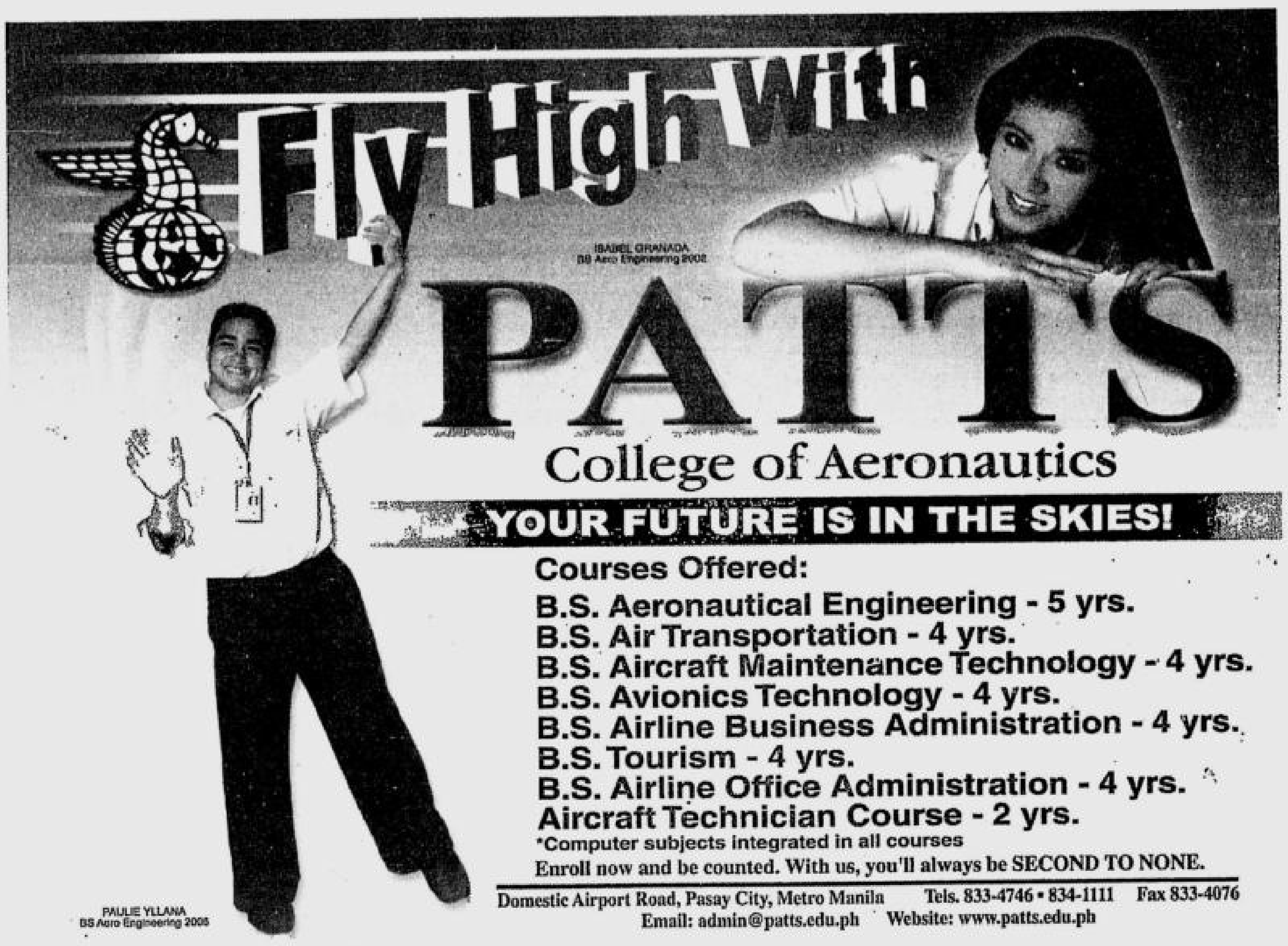
Eric Menk pumped in 31 points and hauled down 21 rebounds as Barangay Ginebra clinched the last quarterfinals spot with a thrilling 69-64 victory over Shell in the second game. The Gin Kings ended the eliminations with a 6-12 record while sending the Turbochargers to their 13th loss in 18 games.

Scores:

ALASKA 90—Arigo 29, Peek 17, Camaso 11, Cortez 10, Noble 8, Feihl 6, Allado 4, Cablay 3, Duat 2, Padilla 0.

PUREFOODS 85—Seigle 20, Santos 17, Castillo 14, Fernandez 12, Mamaril 8, Patrimonio 5, Demape 5, Raymundo 4, Echavez 0.

Quarters: 24-25, 48-40, 68-64, 90-85.



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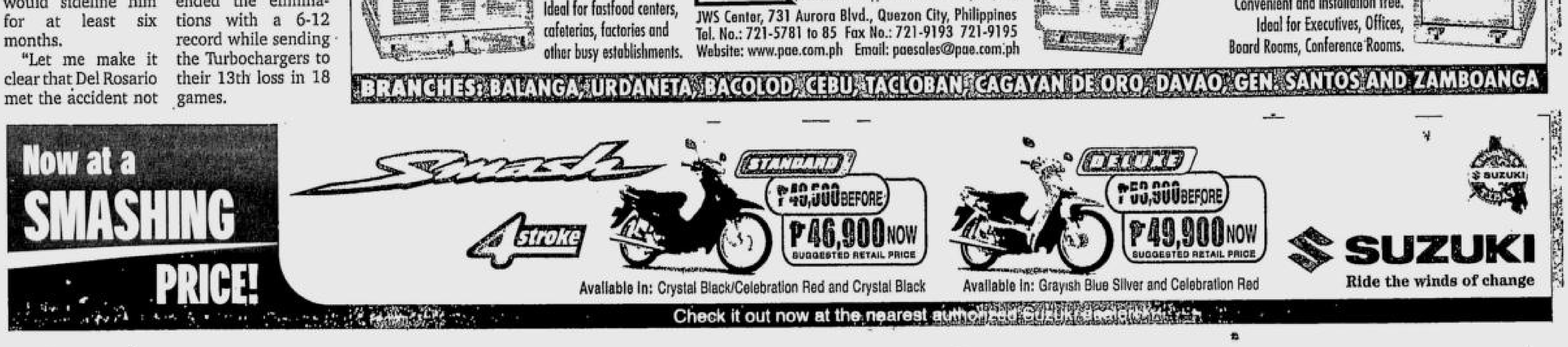

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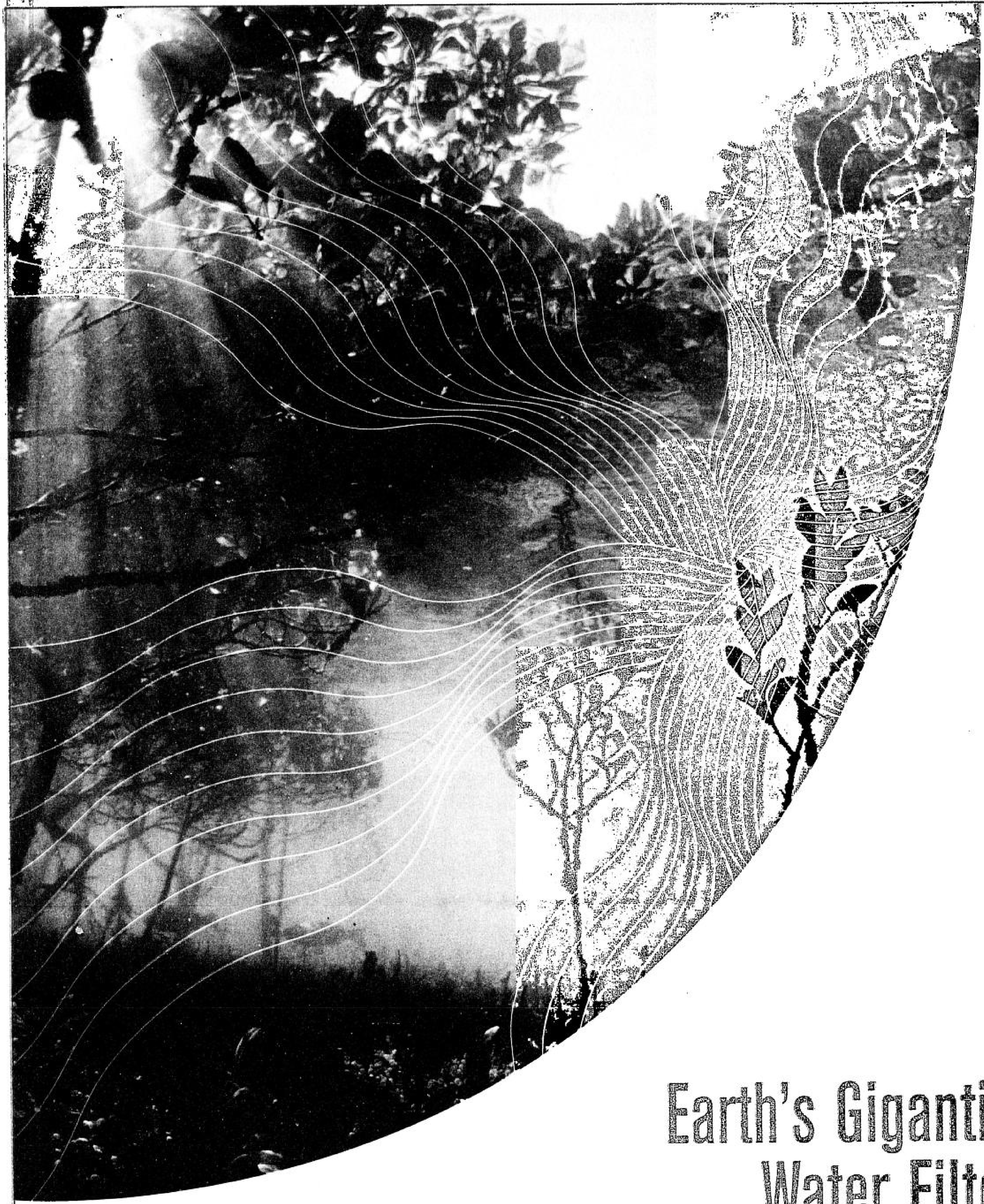

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This undertaking has three components: restoration of 150 hectares of mangrove forest in Pagbilao (classified as the world's second most diverse mangrove ecosystem); rehabilitation of 150 hectares of upland forest; and establishment of a 145-hectare Mangrove Eco-Destination Site. This site could serve as the country's future 'mangrove seedling bank' with its 48 mangrove species and a major eco-destination center for research and education.

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Mall guards…

From page A24

and longer queues at the entrance of key establishments.

At the Light Rail Transit station in Monumento, guards usually spend approximately 10 seconds frisking passengers and inspecting their baggage, said one security officer.

They also request passengers to open all their bags and even the most heavily taped package. Prickly commuters are told to leave if they protest the strict security procedure.

Measures are also stringent at the Tritran bus station in Buendia in Pasay City.

"We don't care if they complain," said one guard. "We're only doing our job and this is for their own good. It's as simple as that."

At the Glorietta Mall in Makati, another guard said he and other officers also keep close watch on trash bins and corners where explosive devices could be easily placed.

Mang Robert, a security guard for 10 years, said the public should also be more conscious of their security in the wake of clashes between government troops and Moro rebels in the south. It would help, he said, if people would avoid populated areas as much as possible.

MMDA ASSURANCE

Floods only knee-deep this time

By Christian V. Esguerra

RAINY days are here and so are the floods.

But the Metro Manila Development Authority yesterday said the situation isn't as bad as last year's.

"We're expecting a 50-percent reduction (in the depth of floodwater)," said general manager Robert Nacianceno. "If floodwater then was waist-deep, it would most likely be only knee-deep this time."

He said reduced floodwater was expected in areas such as Buendia and Chino Roces avenues in Makati, Roxas District in Quezon City and Blumentritt in Manila. These areas get flooded because of clogged drainage systems.

Nacianceno said the MMDA has been cleaning up waterways since October last year when the agency took over the flood control function of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

"The cleaning is 80 percent complete," he said. "We hope the people would also do their part by throwing garbage in its proper place."

But northern Metro Manila, Taguig, Pateros, and parts of Pasig and Rizal province would still be flooded with sea water during the rainy season.

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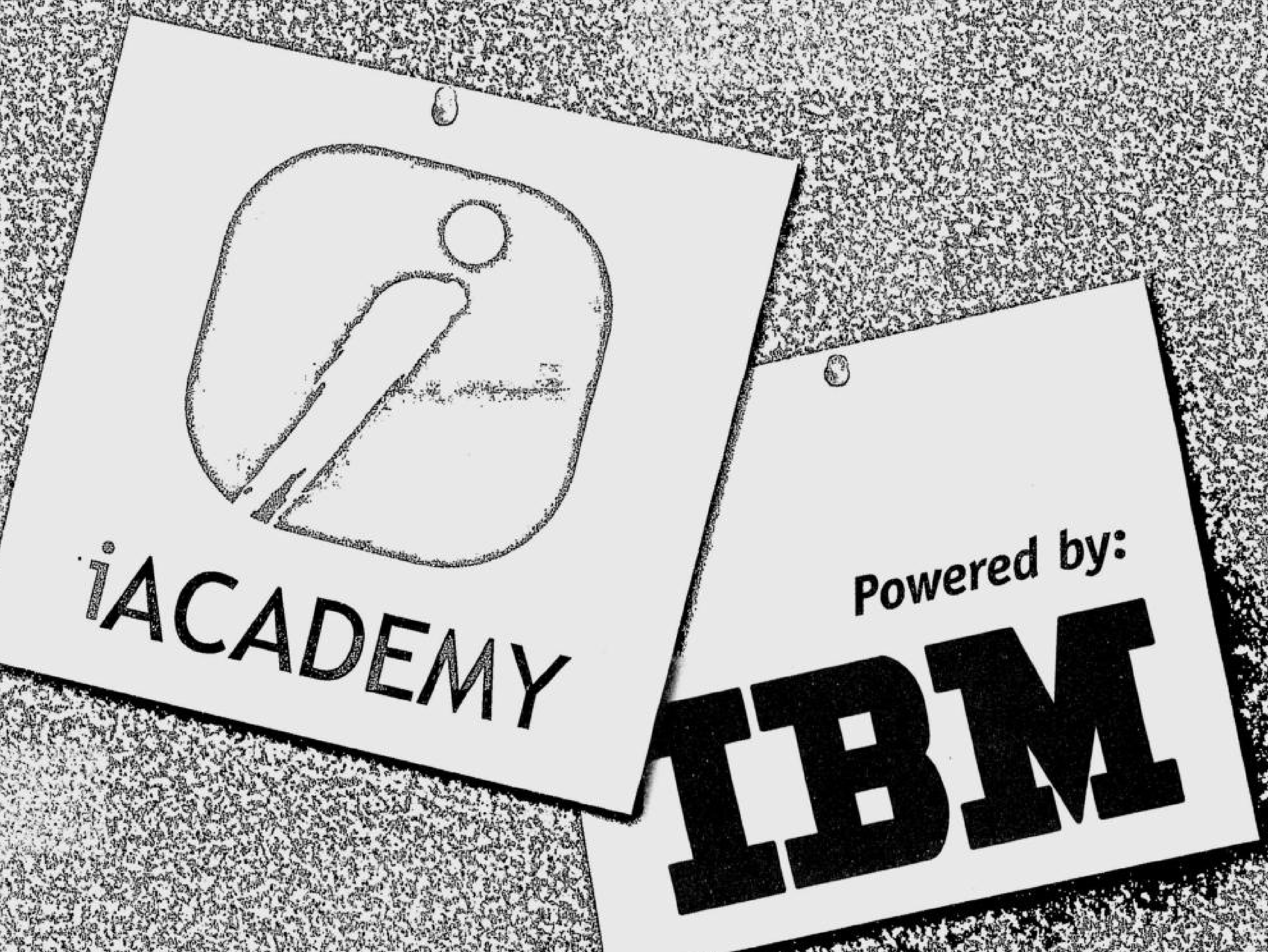

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Mall guards more vigilant

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By Christian V. Esguerra

GUARDS in Metro Manila's shopping malls have become sharper than ever, bracing for a possible terrorist attack as a result of escalating tension in Mindanao.

Closer to home, the motivation is economic. "One explosion would definitely cost us our jobs," Jun, 27, a guard at Rustan's in Makati, told the INQUIRER Saturday night.

The ongoing military campaign in Mindanao has prompted guards to be more adamant and meticulous in securing not only shopping malls but also bus terminals, train stations and other populated areas in the metropolis.

Being a primary line of defense next to policemen, Jun said he and other guards were feeling like "real" law enforcers because of the series of security seminars they had received.

Mall guards, he said, went through a 15-day crash course on anti-terrorism measures at Camp Crame last year. The seminar taught them how to detect explosives and bomb ingredients, he added.

The result was a more stringent inspection

MALL/ A23

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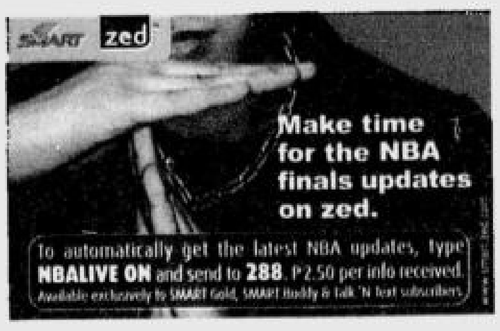
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BETTER TRAINING SOUGHT

Gold medal eludes RP boxer in Spain

By Roy Luarca

SEVILLE, Spain—Harry Tañamor failed to repeat over Bulgarian Salim Salimov on Saturday and settled for the light flyweight silver medal in the BoxAm tournament at the Polideportivo el Paraguas here.

The failure to clinch the gold readily sent Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines president Manny T. Lopez ordering an improved training for Filipino fighters that would compete in future international meets.

Lopez cited the need of his fighters to improve a lot going to the World Championship in July in Bangkok.

He ordered coach Pat Gaspi and assistant coach Alex Arroyo to resume training and adopt a better system as soon as they return to Manila.

Obviously confident he was stronger than Salimov, whom he had beaten by RSC (Referee Stops Contest) in the Acropolis Cup in Greece last year, Tañamor chose to engage the Bulgarian in toe-to-toe exchanges in the first two rounds.

That proved costly for Tañamor as Salimov, although getting no clear hits, piled up points and went on to score a 15-12 victory that set the tone for the Bulgarians' romp in the 11-nation tournament.

All seven Bulgarian finalists prevailed to the dismay of the non-European participants, who felt the judges could've been intimidated by the presence at ringside of Bulgarian Jet Chev, head of the Amateur International Boxing Association's referees/ judges commission.

Tañamor claimed he was able to fend off most of Salimov's punches, but his rival kept on getting points.

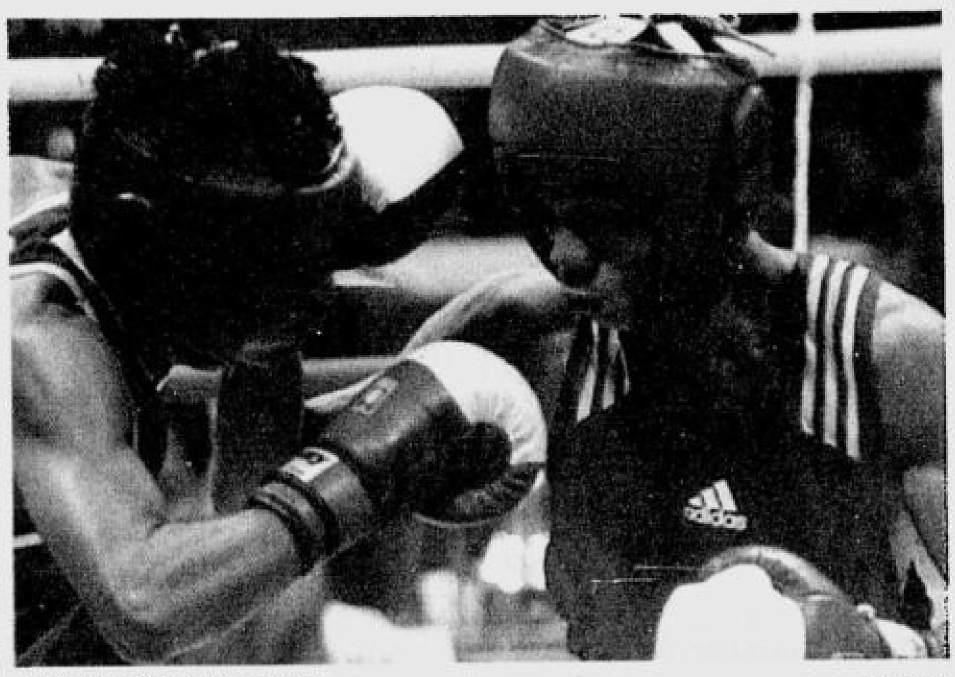
"I went for a knockout in the final round, but I couldn't nail him with a big punch," he said in Tagalog.

The six-man RP Revicon team thus wound up with one silver and two bronzes, courtesy of flyweight Warlito Parreñas and featherweight Jenebert Basadre to land seventh overall.

France finished a distant second to Bulgaria with two golds and two silvers, followed by Spain and Scotland with one gold and one silver each. South Korea, which sent an 11-man team, finished with three silvers and was ranked ahead of Mexico with two silvers.

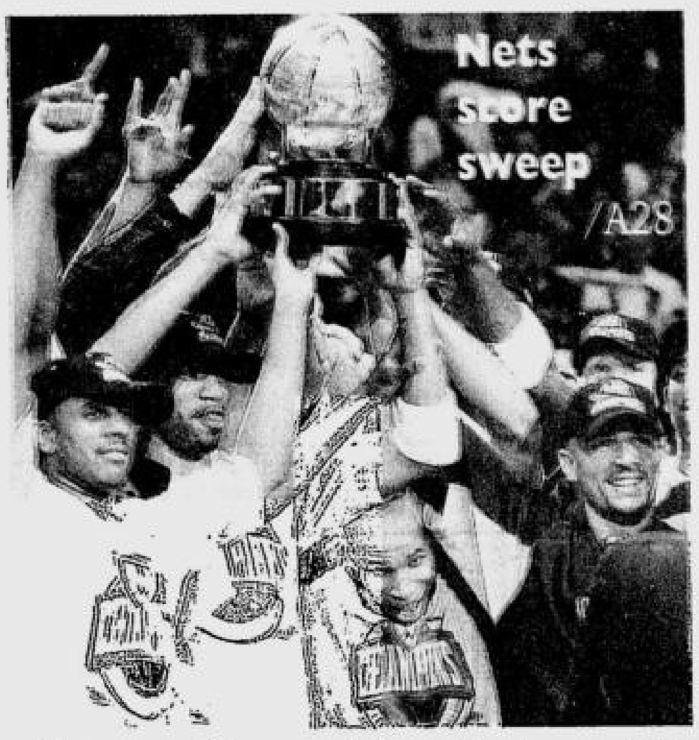
Also with RP Revicon are bantamweight Arlan Lerio, who won a gold medal in Lithuania prior to the Seville slugfest; lightweight Esmael Bacongan, welterweight Florencio Ferrer and international referee/judge Mar de Guia.

The Filipinos, whose foreign stint is being supported by Pacific Heights, the Philippine Sports Commission and Accel, are scheduled to leave here Tuesday en route to Athens for the Acropolis Cup.



TAÑAMOR (right) in action. PDI PHOTO

WHAT'S INSIDE



Pistons still proud despite loss /A29
Nowitzki doubtful for Game 4 /A28

West Bound wins Cojuangco Cup /A26

Sorenstam back to where she belongs /A32
Williams, Costa face tough task /A27
Menk tops balloting /A26
Chile netters snatch World Team Cup /A30

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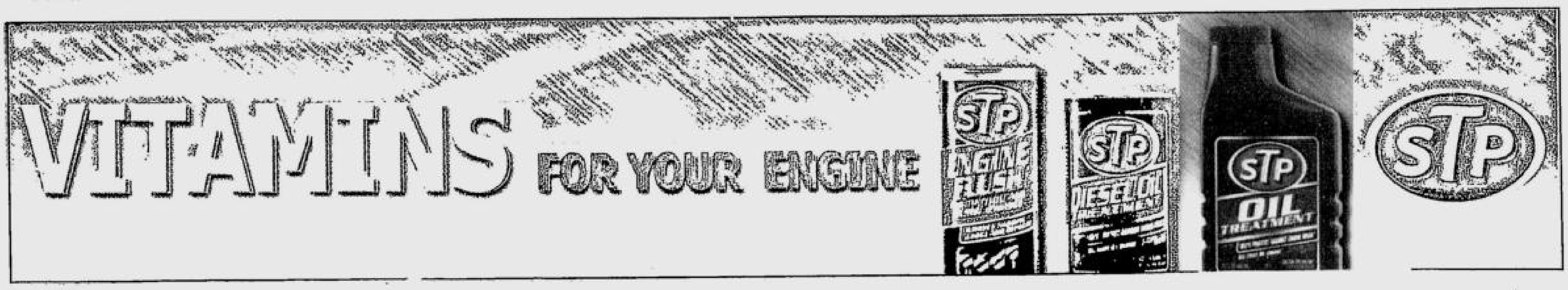

West Bound bags Cojuangco Cup

WEST Bound (right) gallops to the finish line ahead of the pack. Also shown (from left) are Security Master, High Octane and Success Story.

JESS YUSON

By Edwin Villanueva

JONATHAN Hernandez's wait-and-see ploy did the trick as West Bound came up with a big stretch run to capture the Cojuangco Cup--first leg of the Philippine Triple Crown series--yesterday at the muddy Santa Ana Park.

"*Nakita ko na naglulutsahan sila kaya nanood lang muna ako saka nagpakawala kay* West Bound (I saw them fighting it out for the lead so I just watched them before letting West Bound loose)," said Hernandez after guiding the far second choice to a four-length triumph in the one-mile contest.

West Bound, a son of Heza Gone West out of Fair Maiden, bagged the P1 million champion's prize for the C&H Ent., the Laguna-based firm best remembered for producing the first Triple Crown champion--Fair and Square–in 1981.

High Octane, Success Story and top favorite Security Master were battling it out for the front position rounding the home turn when West Bound stormed ahead from the outside and drew clear to score the victory on a rainy afternoon.

Favorite Girl, the longest shot in the field of six three-year-old gallopers, rallied from dead last to win the photo for runner-up honors worth P376,750, while Success Story settled for third and P209,250.

Top choice Security Master wound up a disappointing fourth, half a length up on High Octane. The other entry, War Hero, stumbled at the start and threw off jockey Pat Dilema.

Unlike in the second leg of the Road To Triple Crown Stakes, Success Story outbroke High Octane and led up to the backside. But High Octane, under Dominador Borbe Jr.'s coaxing, surged ahead nearing the home turn even as Security Master tried to get closer.

It was at this point that Hernandez urged West Bound for the kill and the bright chestnut responded strongly to win with still plenty to spare.

For Hernandez, it was a back-to-back feat as he also skippered Golden Ballet to victory in the Cojuangco Cup last year. "*Magdadasal ako na manalo pa uli sa huling dalawang* legs *si* West Bound (I'll pray that West Bound wins again in the last two legs)," he added.

West Bound negotiated the race in 1:42 flat (25-25-242-8).

Manila, Bacolod SEA Games co-hosts?

By Marc Reyes

IF the Philippines follows the growing trend of staging the Southeast Asian Games in different venues, then Manila and Bacolod could end up co-hosting the biennial sportsfest in 2005.

This developed yesterday after Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella made a big pitch for his hometown to serve as nerve center of the 2005 SEA Games which the country is hosting for the third time.

He said Panaad Stadium–located some five kilometers from the city's downtown and sits in the middle of a vast forest of eucalyptus trees–is a relatively new and well-kept sports complex worthy of the standards of the regional meet.

The complex hosted the Palarong Pambansa two years ago with the provincial and city government joining hands to maintain the facilities since then.

"When we host big international sports events like the SEA Games our aim should be to put our best foot forward," said Puentevella.

He was obviously referring to Manila's bid to host the 70-year-old Rizal Memorial Sports Complex the main hub of the Games for the third time despite the RMSC's obvious handicap in terms of size and lack of modern competition arenas.

However, lobbyists for RMSC noted the proximity to hotels and commercial centers for the expected 5,000 foreign athletes and officials.

In this light, sports officials could opt to divide the competition between Bacolod and Manila since this practice was successfully pulled off by Malaysia in 2001 and the same will be in place in Vietnam this year with the cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh serving as venues.

Bobby Pacquiao decisions Lorona, keeps title

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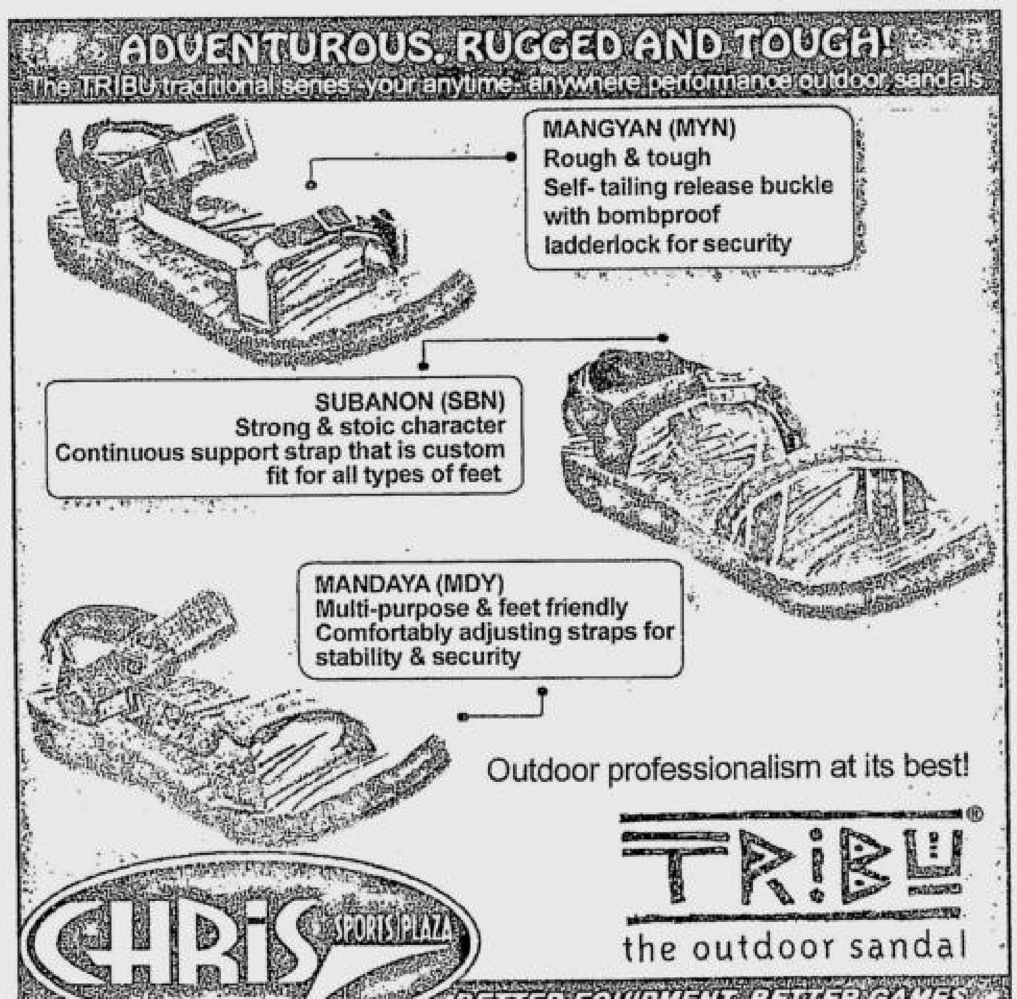

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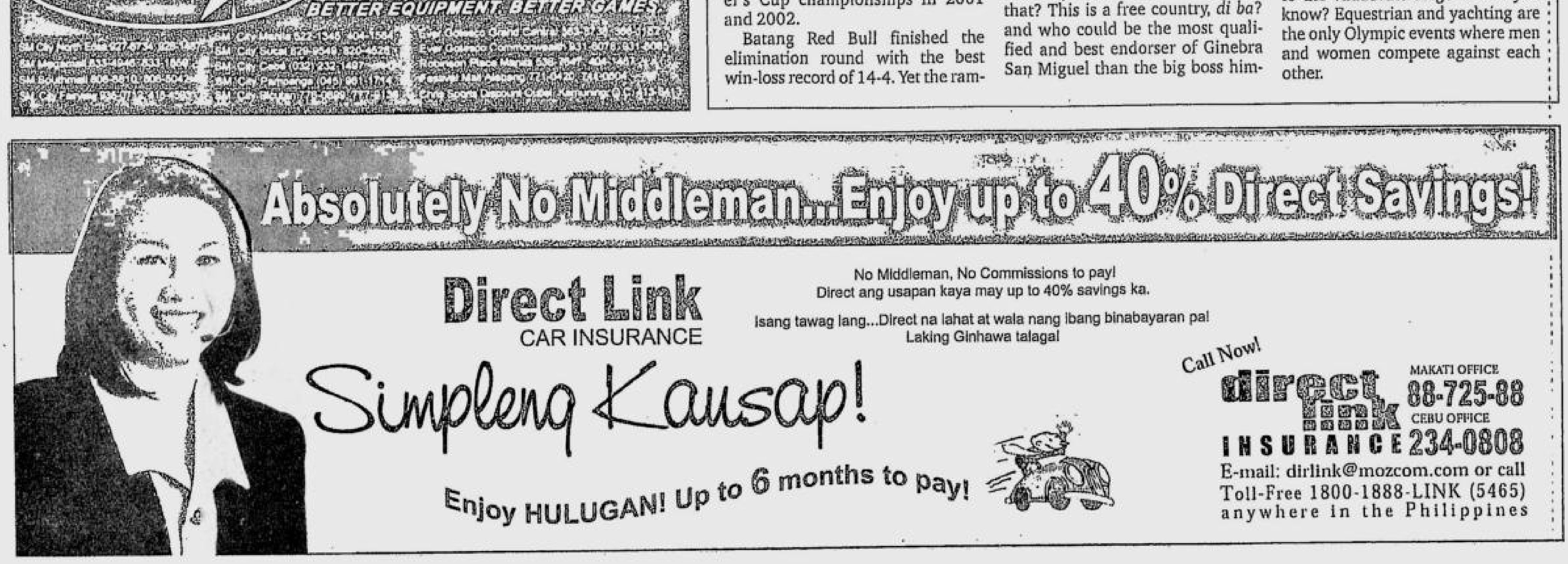

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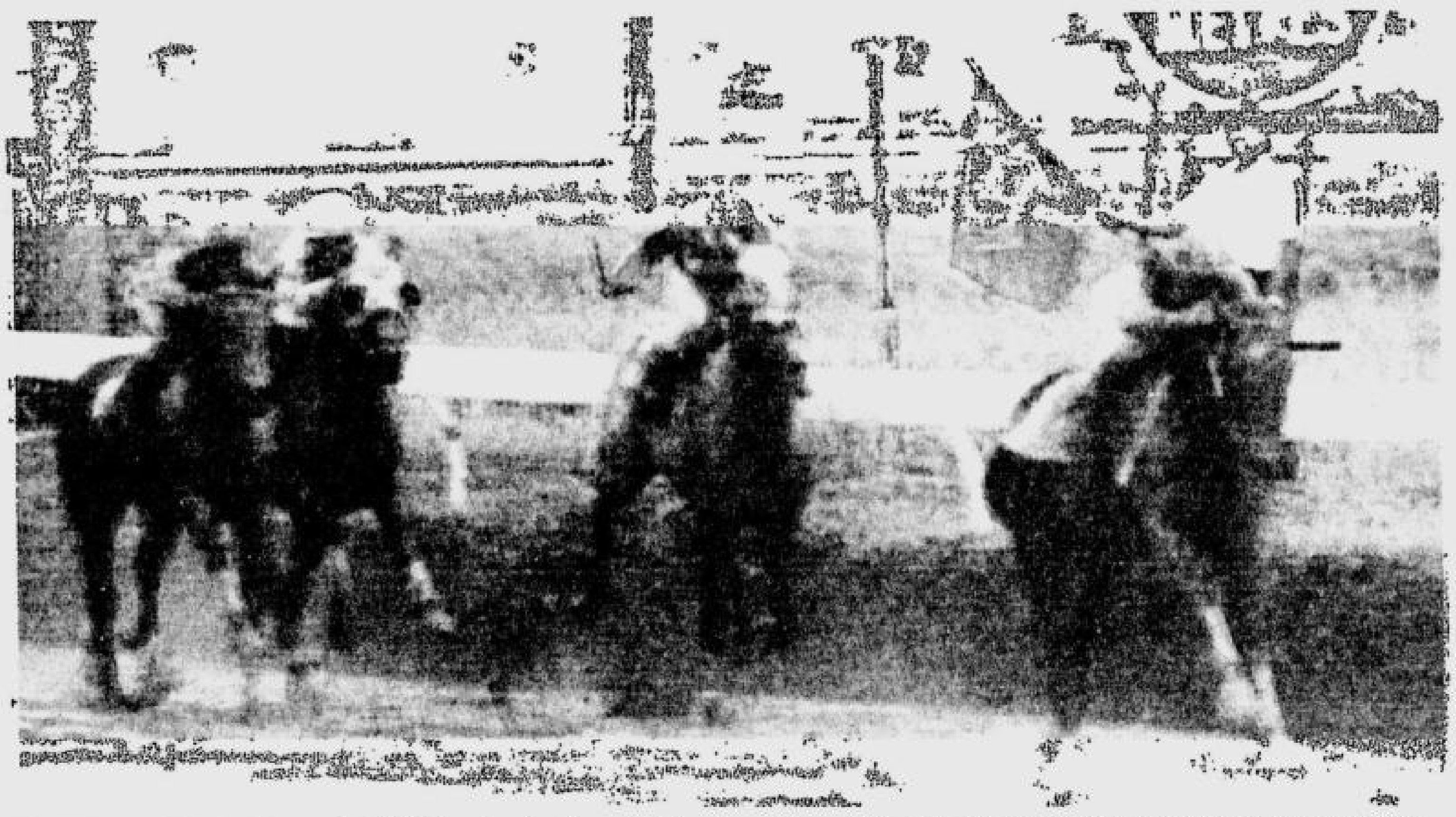
West Bound bags Cojuangco Cup



WEST Bound (right) gallops to the finish line ahead of the pack. Also shown (from left) are Security Master, High Octane and Success Story.

JESS YUSON

By Edwin Villanueva

JONATHAN Hernandez's wait-and-see ploy did the trick as West Bound came up with a big stretch run to capture the Cojuangco Cup--first leg of the Philippine Triple Crown series--yesterday at the muddy Santa Ana Park.

"*Nakita ko na naglulutsahan sila kaya nanood lang muna ako saka nagpakawala kay* West Bound (I saw them fighting it out for the lead so I just watched them before letting West Bound loose)," said Hernandez after guiding the far second choice to a four-length triumph in the one-mile contest.

West Bound, a son of Heza Gone West out of Fair Maiden, bagged the P1 million champion's prize for the C&H Ent., the Laguna-based firm best remembered for producing the first Triple Crown champion--Fair and Square--in 1981.

High Octane, Success Story and top favorite Security Master were battling it out for the front position rounding the home turn when West Bound stormed ahead from the outside and drew clear to score the victory on a rainy afternoon.

Favorite Girl, the longest shot in the field of six three-year-old gallopers, rallied from dead last to win the photo for runner-up honors worth P376,750, while Success Story settled for third and P209,250.

Top choice Security Master wound up a disappointing fourth, half a length up on High Octane. The other entry, War Hero, stumbled at the start and threw off jockey Pat Dilema.

Unlike in the second leg of the Road To Triple Crown Stakes, Success Story outbroke High Octane and led up to the backside. But High Octane, under Dominador Borbe Jr.'s coaxing, surged ahead nearing the home turn even as Security Master tried to get closer.

It was at this point that Hernandez urged West Bound for the kill and the bright chestnut responded strongly to win with still plenty to spare.

For Hernandez, it was a back-to-back feat as he also skippered Golden Ballet to victory in the Cojuangco Cup last year. "*Magdadasal ako na manalo pa uli sa huling dalawang* legs si West Bound (I'll pray that West Bound wins again in the last two legs)," he added.

West Bound negotiated the race in 1:42 flat (25-25-242-8).

Manila, Bacolod SEA Games co-hosts?

By Marc Reyes

IF the Philippines follows the growing trend of staging the Southeast Asian Games in different venues, then Manila and Bacolod could end up co-hosting the biennial sportsfest in 2005.

This developed yesterday after Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella made a big pitch for his hometown to serve as nerve center of the 2005 SEA Games which the country is hosting for the third time.

He said Panaad Stadium–located some five kilometers from the city's downtown and sits in the middle of a vast forest of eucalyptus trees–is a relatively new and well-kept sports complex worthy of the standards of the regional meet.

The complex hosted the Palarong Pambansa two years ago with the provincial and city government joining hands to maintain the facilities since then.

"When we host big international sports events like the SEA Games our aim should be to put our best foot forward," said Puentevella.

He was obviously referring to Manila's bid to host the 70-year-old Rizal Memorial Sports Complex the main hub of the Games for the third time despite the RMSC's obvious handicap in terms of size and lack of modern competition arenas.

However, lobbyists for RMSC noted the proximity to hotels and commercial centers for the expected 5,000 foreign athletes and officials.

In this light, sports officials could opt to divide the competition between Bacolod and Manila since this practice, was successfully pulled off by Malaysia in 2001 and the same will be in place in Vietnam this year with the cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh serving as venues.

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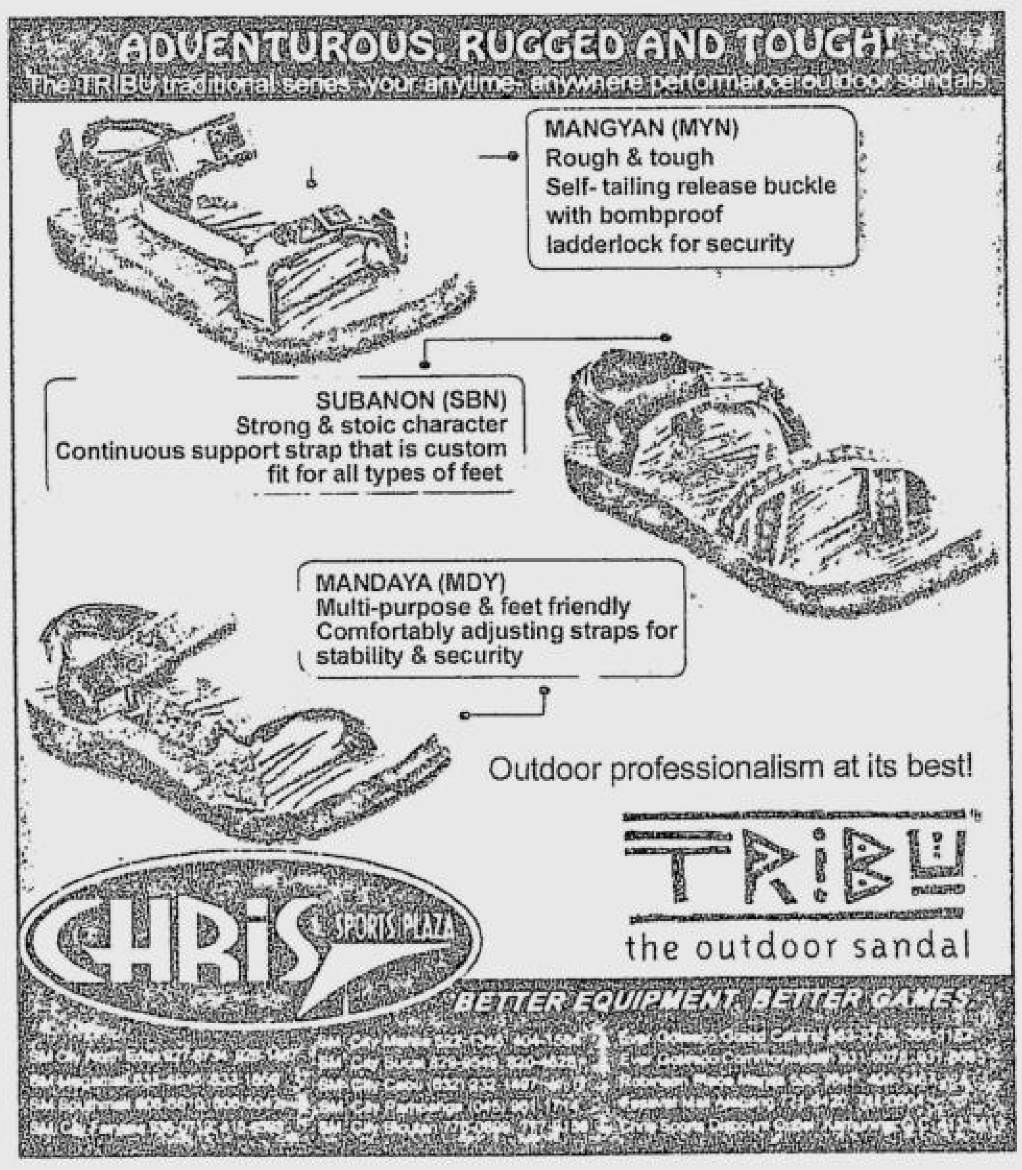

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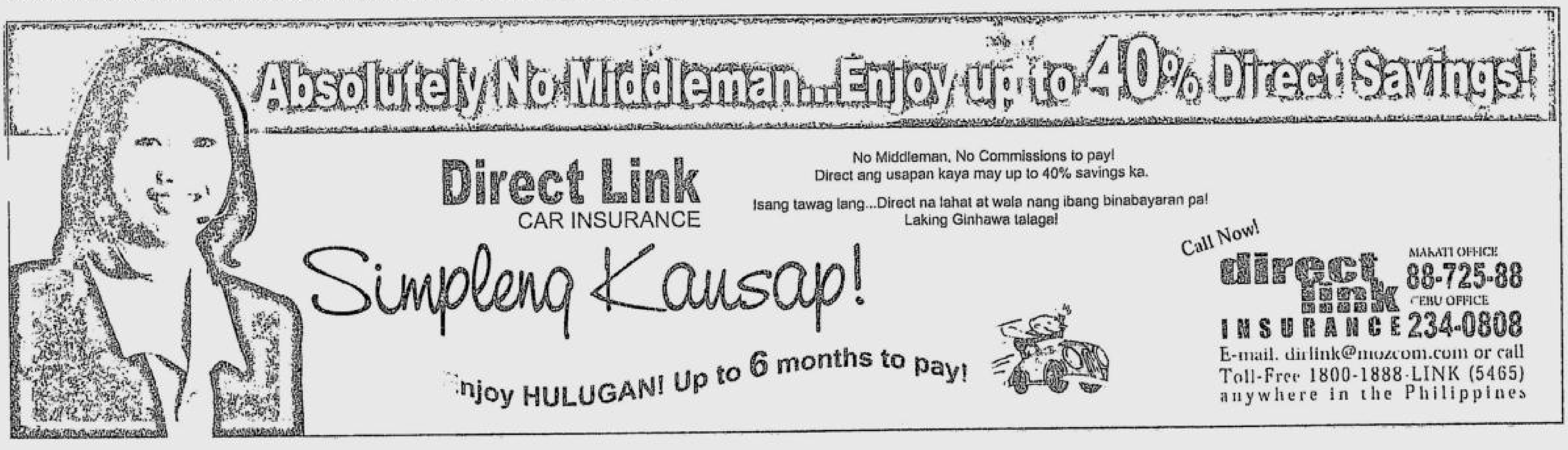

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Cebu jail puzzle explained

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

PERRY McNeely, a Cebu-based boxing manager, had cried through this column that he continued to be puzzled by his detention at the Bureau of Immigration cell in Mandaue City. He said he had never been given a hearing since being held two years ago. But yesterday, he said the BI Board of Commissioners granted his request for a reconsideration of his deportation order. It's not a hearing where he could personally face his accusers, but McNeely said he was happy enough for a chance to present evidence to support his innocence.

Anyway, before this, the Office of the BI Commissioner, in answer to a previous column, sent this explanation behind McNeely's continued detention:

***

Dear Mr. Trinidad,

Allow us to submit this response to your column of 14 May 2003 entitled Legal Puzzle Inside a Cebu Prison Cell. In sum, Mr. McNeely claims that he must be released on bail, because "xxx a total of 12 (criminal) charges against him had actually been dropped by the courts for lack of merit."

We note that on 18 June 2002 the Board of Commissioners (BOC) of this Bureau promulgated a decision that declared him an undesirable alien. However, the BOC may review/re-open this decision because BI records show that Mr. McNeely exceeded the period of his authorized stay. Further, it appears that neither has he presented proof of a working permit under Commonwealth Act (CA) No. 613, Section 42 (a) (32) nor evidence of an employment visa under CA No. 613, Section 9 (g) that allows him to promote local professional boxing. Verily, he continues to maintain an unlawful presence in the Philippines.

***

Moreover, in the interest of justice, we granted his request to contest a letter dated 12 March 2002 from the Legal Alternatives for Women Center Inc. This letter, in essence, cited a history of criminal cases for child sexual abuse against him before the 22nd Judicial District Court of the State of Louisiana Parish of St. Tamany, USA. Under these premises, therefore, he certainly poses a clear threat to public welfare; hence, the detention without bail.

Finally, we wish to clarify that the Supreme Court has ruled that, since a deportation proceeding does not constitute a criminal action and an order of deportation is not a punishment for a crime, the right to bail guaranteed by the Constitution may not be invoked by an alien in said proceedings (La Tang Bun vs Fabre, 81 Phil. 682; US vs Gociaco 12 Phil. 490). Moreover, neither the Constitution nor the Administrative Code guarantees the right of aliens facing deportation to provisional liberty on bail (Tiu Chun Hai, et al. vs Deportation Board, 104 Phil. 949). Likewise, aliens in deportation proceedings, as a rule, have no inherent right to bail; and it has been held that a person arrested or detained cannot be released on bail, unless the right is granted expressly by law (Bengzon vs Ocampo, et al. 84 Phil. 611 cited in Ong See Hang, et al. vs Hon. Commissioner of Immigration, et al., L-9700 28 February 1962).

Finally, CA No. 613, Section 37 (e) confers upon the Commissioner of Immigration the power and discretion to grant bail in deportation proceedings. The use of the word "may" in said provision indicates that the grant of bail is merely permissive and not mandatory or obligatory on the part of the Commissioner of Immigration (Ong See Hang, et al. vs Hon. Commissioner of Immigration, supra).

Verily, the Commissioner of Immigration has an absolute and broad discretion in determining whether or not to temporarily release an alien in a deportation proceeding under bail.

Under these circumstances, there is no doubt that the actions of the Commissioner of Immigration in Mr. McNeely's case rest on solid, legal foundations. It is absolutely unfair, therefore, for Mr. McNeely to conclude that the Commissioner of Immigration "has been making a mockery of justice" and "allowed to run roughshod on our legal system."

We hope this clarifies the factual and legal bases for the continued detention of Mr. McNeely by this Bureau.

ANDREA D. DOMINGO
Commissioner, Bureau of Immigration

Williams, Costa face tough task defending French titles

VENUS Williams warms up at Roland Garros.

PARIS—Title-holders Serena Williams and Albert Costa will be feeling the heat despite the chilly weather forecast for the second Grand Slam of the season which starts here on Monday.

The reigning champions' crowns are looking decidedly shaky on the eve of the two-week tournament on the slow red clay of the Roland Garros complex on the outskirts of the capital.

Williams will be going for her fifth straight major title, something last accomplished by Germany's Steffi Graf in 1988-89.

But while the journey back to Paris should be a sentimental one for Williams, who won the first of her 22 WTA titles here, and began her "Serena Slam" at Roland Garros last year, the 21-year-old American arrives on the back of losses to Justine Henin-Hardenne in Charleston and French hope Amelie Mauresmo, the fifth seed, in Rome.

"She can be frustrated," warned Belgium's Henin-Hardenne. "I think it's good for the other players that we can see that."

Mauresmo, who has never got beyond the fourth round at Roland Garros, agreed: "I'm trying not to put any pressure on myself this year. But I believe I have a way of beating the Williams."

Yet another all-Williams Grand Slam final is not certain as elder sister Venus, seeded third, who has yet to win in Paris and opens against US qualifier Samantha Reeves, is short on match play and form after pulling a stomach muscle before the German Open.

World number one Serena is in the top half of the draw and will go up against experienced German Barbara Rittner, but lurking down the line is dangerous Belgian second seed Kim Clijsters, winner on clay at the Italian Open, and slayer of Serena in the season-ending championships last year.

Costa, meanwhile, begins against Argentine qualifier Sergio Roitman, and the ninth seed admits it will be a tough task faced with world number one Lleyton Hewitt, former champion Gustavo Kuerten and young French hope Richard Gasquet all in his side at the top half of the draw.

American Andy Roddick is also brimming with confidence after winning his first European title with ease Saturday on the Austrian clay of St. Polten.

"I felt really good here and it has set me up well for next week in Paris," said Roddick. *AFP*

PARIS—Bahia Mouhtassine will become the first Moroccan woman to play in the main draw of the French Open this week after beating China's Jie Zheng, 7-6, 6-4, in the final round of qualifying. *Reuters*

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AT A GLANCE

NBA PLAYOFFS 2003

CONFERENCE FINALS

Eastern Conference

(1) Detroit vs. (2) New Jersey
Pistons 0, Nets 4
Game 1: New Jersey 76, Detroit 74
Game 2: New Jersey 88, Detroit 86
Game 3: New Jersey 97, Detroit 85
Game 4: New Jersey 102, Detroit 82
New Jersey wins Eastern Conference title, 4-0

Western Conference

(1) San Antonio vs (3) Dallas
Spurs 2, Mavericks 1
Game 1: Dallas 113, San Antonio 110
Game 2: San Antonio 119, Dallas 106
Game 3: San Antonio 96, Dallas 83
Game 4 at Dallas (May 26, 8:30 a.m.)
Game 5 at San Antonio (May 28, 9:30 a.m.)
*Game 6 at Dallas (May 30, 9:30 a.m.)
*Game 7 at San Antonio (June 1, 8:30 a.m.)

* If necessary
TBD (To Be Determined)

SPORTS TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: Spurs vs Mavericks, Game 4; 8:30 a.m. (r- 10 p.m.); Solar Sports; 9 a.m. (r - 7 p.m.); IBC 13 and Solar Sports (r - 10 p.m.) - San Antonio aims to win its second straight game in Dallas.

NBA Jam; 6:30 p.m.; IBC 13 - Whet your basketball appetite with a smorgasbord of slam dunks, buzzer beaters and other spectacular moves in this half - hour show.

GOLF: PGA Bank of Colonial, Final Round; 2 p.m. and 10 p.m. (r); Star Sports - Take a look back at the warm-up event to the US Open.

BILLIARDS: Rack 'Em Up 2; 7 p.m.; ESPN - Daryl Peach has a tall order when he faces Efren 'Bata' Reyes.

BOXING: Boxing's Finest Hour; 9:30 p.m.; IBC 13 - Jabs, uppercuts, hooks and the occasional low blows are featured this flashback boxing show.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

KIDD celebrates with son TJ. AP

'PBL won't humiliate drug users'

By Dennis U. Eroa

REHABILITATION, not humiliation.

This, according to Commissioner Chino Trinidad, will be the guiding principle of the PBL to avoid the pitfalls suffered by the PBA in its own battle against drug offenders.

"I can very well assure the confidentiality of the results of our drug testing. The PBL will not humiliate in public those who will be found positive. These guys are victims and they must not be crucified," Trinidad told the INQUIRER Saturday.

The PBL board headed by Blu Star team owner Dioceldo Sy had already approved a league-wide drug testing to be handled by Asia-Pacific Medical and Diagnostic Inc., a Makati-based private company.

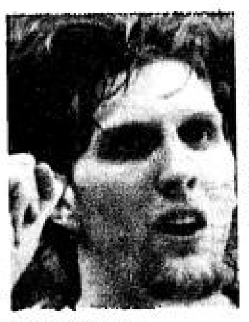
Trinidad said the league will not publicly identify the players who fail the drug test.

'To put drug offenders in the public eye will have a negative effect. The main thing is to help them come back with their pride intact," said Trinidad.

The PBA is still reeling from the negative effect of its efforts to weed out the undesirables in its ranks.

Nowitzki doubtful for Game 4 after MRI reveals sprain

DALLAS—Dirk Nowitzki's knee injury is not as bad as the Mavericks feared, although Dallas listed him as doubtful for Sunday's Game 4 against the San Antonio Spurs.



NOWITZKI

An MRI showed a sprain to the ligaments that hold the left kneecap in place, but there was no other structural damage, the Mavericks said.

"With an injury like this the typical recovery time is 10-14 days," Mavericks team physician Dr. T.O. Souryal said Saturday. "However, Dirk is an amazing athlete and with 24-hour treatment that we have already implemented, we hope he may be able to return to the court during this series."

Nowitzki's knee buckled inward when he collided with San Antonio's Manu Ginobili during the fourth quarter of Game 3 on Friday night. The Spurs won 96-83 to take a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven Western Conference finals.

"Well, it's great news. I think I was lucky," Nowitzki said. "I think it could have been a lot worse after seeing the replay last night.

"Basically what happened last night is that I've never had a knee injury before and I was just in shock. I had pain and I didn't know what to do. I couldn't move it. Already last night it started feeling better, and this morning I could walk around, so it's a lot better than I thought at first."

There was other injury news for the Mavs, and it was not good.

A MRI performed on Shawn Bradley's right knee showed a sprained medial collateral ligament, and the Mavs said he would be out indefinitely. Also, third-string center Evan Eschmeyer said a loose piece of cartilage in his left knee will likely prevent him from playing in the postseason.

That means Dallas might have to go into Game 4 with only nine players in uniform. Raef LaFrentz, Eduardo Najera and Adrian Griffin would be the only big men available to defend San Antonio's Tim Duncan, David Robinson and Malik Rose.

"We're going to put Steve Nash on him one-on-one in the low post–see how good Duncan really is, Mr. MVP," Nelson joked at Dallas' practice before the results of Nowitzki's MRI were known.

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich was peppered with questions about how he'll attack the Mavericks if Nowitzki wasn't available–and about how Dallas might use a small lineup. But Popovich was having none of it.

"I'm very sure he'll play," Popovich said.

Nowitzki's status will remain the No. 1 question right up until the 8:30 p.m. start of Game 4.

"I will not play Dirk Nowitzki if his knee is not perfect," Nelson said.

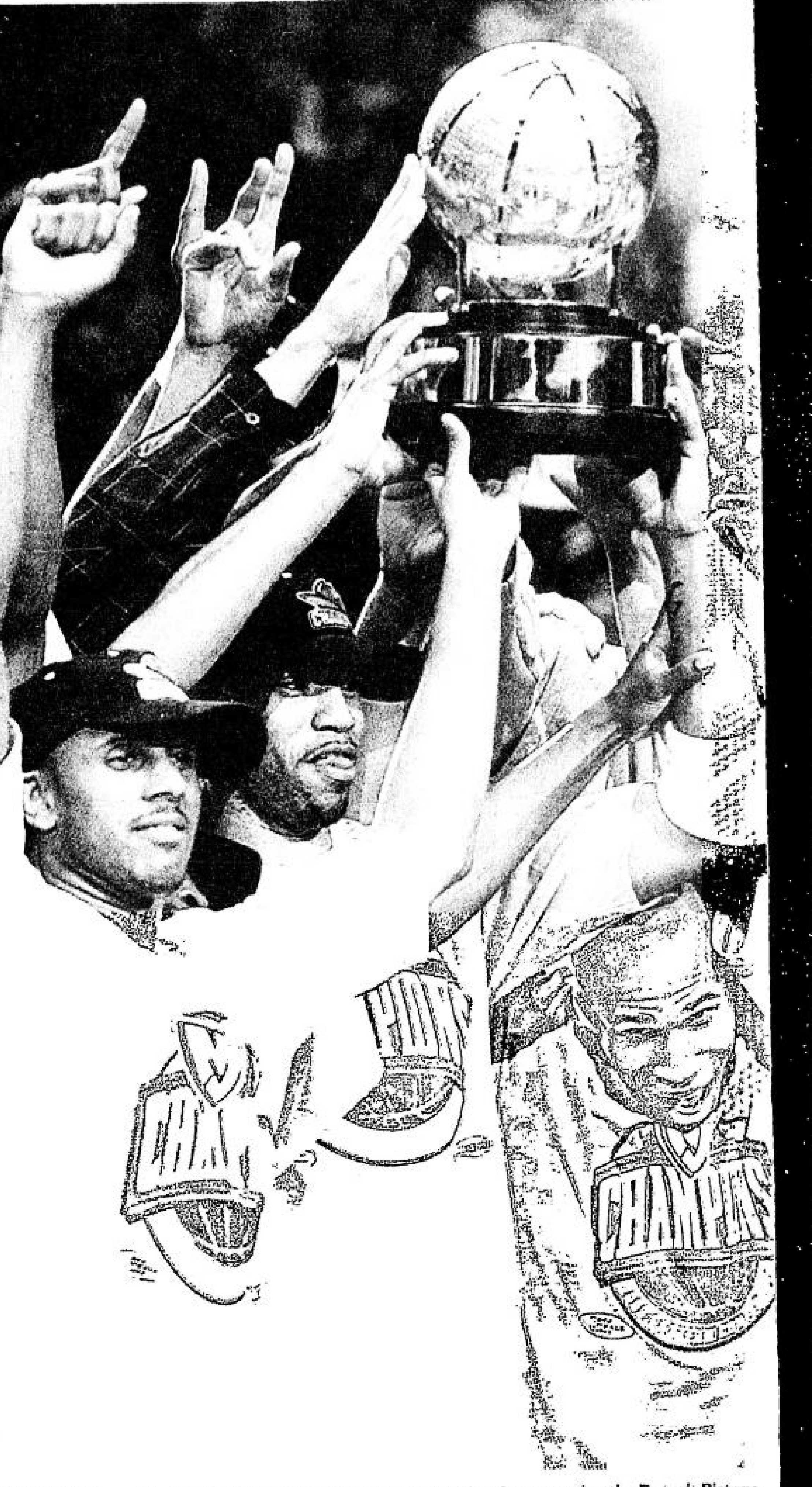
If Nowitzki sits out, the Mavericks will probably try to win it with something out of the nether reaches of Nelson's brain. Maybe they'll try to score 140 points. Maybe they'll shoot 50 3-pointers. Maybe they'll force to Eschmeyer get his gimpy $20 million knee out there to foul Tim Duncan six times.

But to the Spurs, none of what Dallas does matters. And they mean it when they say that.

San Antonio's preferred mode of preparation is almost entirely self-centered.

"We spend less time getting ready for other teams than any team I've been on. I was totally the opposite when I was a head coach," said P.J. Carlesimo, Popovich's assistant.

What worked for the Spurs on offense in Game 3 was the usual– Duncan's 34 points and 24 rebounds– mixed in with something relatively new–Tony Parker scoring 29 points in a dazzling mixture of quick drives to the basket and feathery jumpers that Nash could not contend with. *AP*



THE NEW Jersey Nets hold up the Eastern Conference trophy after sweeping the Detroit Pistons .

Smith, Kerr wait, wonder

DALLAS—Rolando Blackman has some advice for Steve Smith and Steve Kerr, the two shooting guards for San Antonio who have sat unused most of the postseason.

Blackman, an assistant coach for the Dallas Mavericks, says Smith and Kerr should stay ready–for the good of their team and their self-respect.

Blackman was in a similar situation during the 1994 playoffs when he was in the twilight of his career and at the end of the New York Knicks' bench.

During Game 7 of the NBA Finals against Houston, John Starks kept missing shots, going 0-for-11 from 3-point range and 2-for-18 overall. Blackman kept looking at New York coach Pat Riley, trying to catch his eye.

"I was ready, and I'm able to sleep at night these days because I know in my heart that I was ready that night," Blackman said.

Blackman, whose uniform No. 22, is retired in Dallas, had waited 13 years to get his chance in the finals.

But he never got the call from Riley, and the Rockets defeated the Knicks to win the championship. Riley has since said that one of his greatest coaching regrets was playing Starks the entire 48 minutes and not giving Blackman a chance.

Smith's career resembles Blackman's more than Kerr's does. Smith is making his 11th playoff appearance without having reached the finals.

But, like Kerr, Smith is watching the Western Conference finals from the bench. *AP*

Johnson will talk to Jordan in June

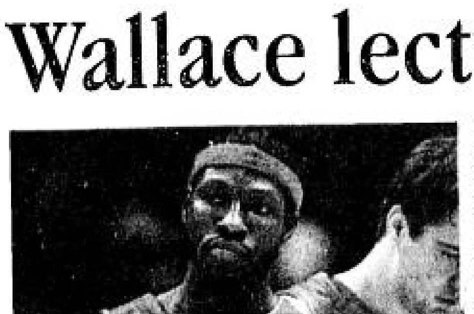
CHARLOTTE, N.C.—Bob Johnson plans to talk with Michael Jordan again June 2 to gauge Jordan's level of interest in joining Charlotte's expansion NBA franchise.

"Michael is aware that I am going to be reaching out to him to do a gut-check, an analysis of where he is," Johnson said Friday. "He knows what is available to him here in Charlotte."

Johnson made his debut as owner of a professional franchise Friday night when the Charlotte Sting opened the WNBA season against the Washington Mystics. *AP*

DESPITE twisting his ankle in the fourth quarter, Kidd soared to lift the Nets to victory. REUTERS

Wallace lectures on rebounding



WALLACE

THE DETROIT Piston's Ben Wallace teaches the fundamentals of rebounding in this Monday's (May 26) episode of NBA Jam at 6:30 p.m. on IBC-13, right before Game Four of the San Antonio Spurs-Dallas Mavericks Western Conference finals at 7 p.m.

Wallace, the NBA's two-time defensive player of the year, also reveals the secret to rebounding the ball against bigger men. The 6-10 Wallace led the NBA in blocks and was second in rebounds this season despite routinely goin against seven-foot opponents night.

NBA Jam, which is produced lar Sports and hosted by Vito L and Seppie Ballesteros, also fe tips on defense (Doug Christie) a fense (Bobby Parks), a dunking e tion by the Cavs' Ricky Davi Michael Jordan's amazing 63 game against the Boston Celtics 1986 NBA Playoffs.

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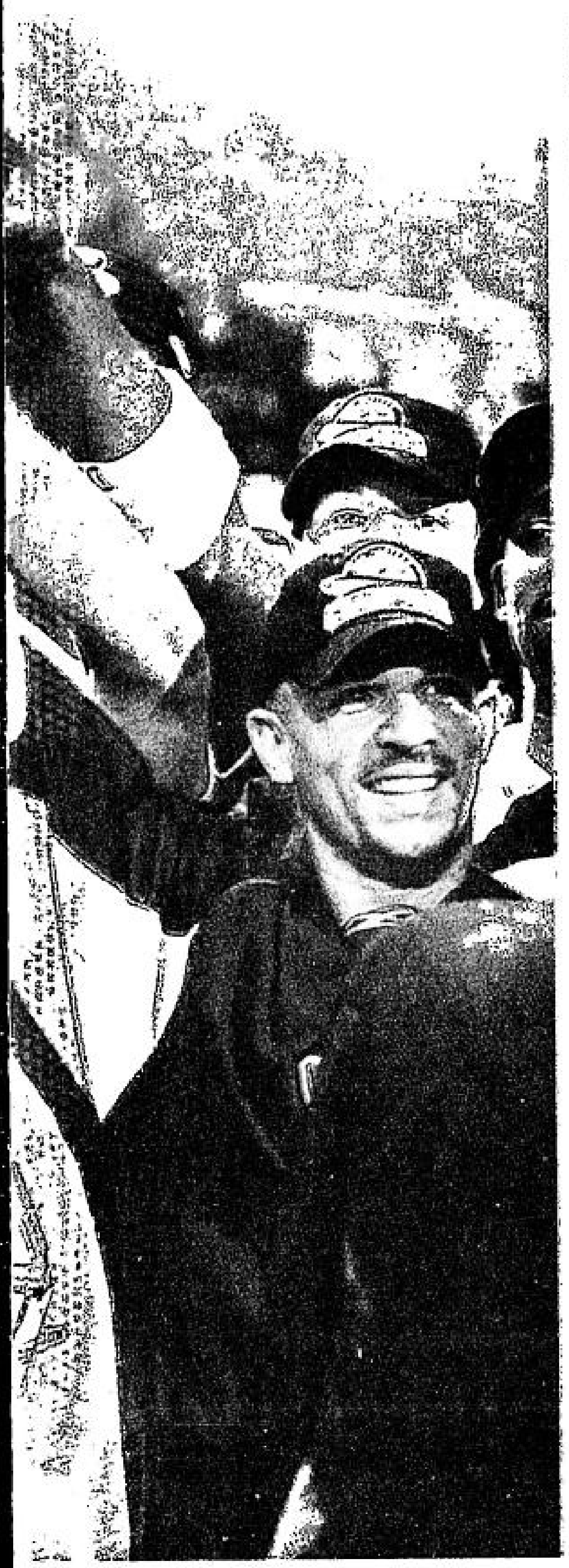
New Jersey scores sweep

Kidd, Nets pummel Pistons, head back to NBA Finals



AFP

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Before there was a celebration, there was an almighty hush. Jason Kidd lay on the court grabbing his right ankle, a towel stuffed in his mouth to help him fight the pain.

Amazingly, Kidd didn't miss a second. He got up and scored eight points in a 13-1 fourth-quarter run that put the game away and led the New Jersey Nets back to the NBA Finals.

Kidd, his ankle only twisted, finished with 26 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists Saturday night as the older, wiser and better Nets defended their Eastern Conference title with a 102-82 victory to complete a sweep of the Detroit Pistons.

"I'm nervous. Our best player's on the floor," coach Byron Scott said. "But I also know he's one of our toughest players."

The Nets, who had five days off between their sweep of Boston and the start of the Detroit series, will have 10 days to prepare for the start of the NBA Finals on June 4. They will play either San Antonio or Dallas, who resume their Western Conference final series Sunday with the Spurs leading 2-1.

The Nets made the NBA Finals in a surprising season a year ago, but were swept by the Los Angeles Lakers.

"This year, unlike last year, we're not just happy to get there," Scott said. "We feel we can win a championship with what we have right here. That one-hit wonder stuff is gone. We have something special here."

The Nets have won 10 consecutive playoff games, the fourth-longest single-season playoff streak in NBA history, behind the 1999 Spurs (12), the 2000 Lakers (11), and the 1989 Lakers (11). The all-time winning streak is 13 by the Lakers, spanning the 1988 and '89 seasons.

"We just ran into a Nets team that is like a steamroller right now," Detroit coach Rick Carlisle said. "Our undoing in this series was letting the first two games get away. We were in a position to win both, and Kenyon Martin and Jason Kidd simply would not let them lose those games."

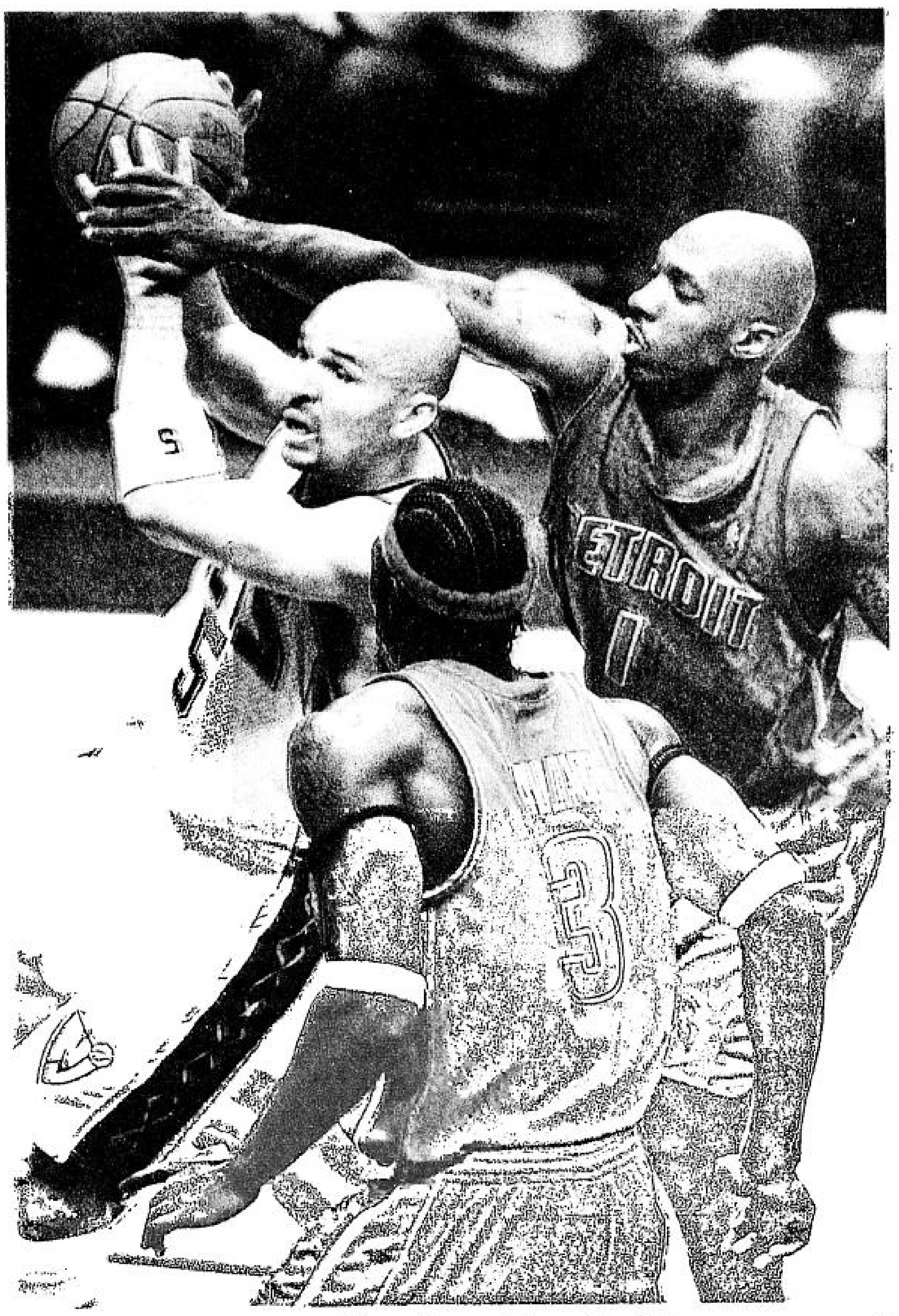
Martin had 14 points and 10 rebounds for the Nets, but it was the Kidd-led fastbreak that again put its stamp on the game. The Nets outscored the Pistons 19-0 in transition–and 94-15 for the series.

Clifford Robinson scored 21 points, and Richard Hamilton, Detroit's only reliable scoring threat in the series, had 20 for the Pistons.

As in Game 3, the Nets took the lead for good in the first quarter although this time things got uncomfortably close early in the fourth quarter–especially when it appeared Kidd might have a serious injury.

The Pistons, showing the heart they lacked in the second half of Game 3, cut a 15-point third-quarter to six on Clifford Robinson's 3-pointer with 9:29 to play.

Then came the scare: Kidd twisted his ankle grabbing the rebound off Hamilton's missed jumper with 6:59 to play. Kidd's right foot landed awkwardly on Ben Wallace's right foot, and the New Jersey point guard had a towel stuffed in his mouth to fight the pain. *AP*



KIDD drives to the basket past Detroit Pistons Chauncey Billups and Ben Wallace. AFP

’istons still proud

’espite loss, Detroit views season as a success

ST RUTHERFORD, N.J.—While welled eyes and somber voices e evidence to the pain, the De- t Pistons insisted being swept in Eastern Conference is didn't detract from r accomplishments season.

No one wanted it to l like this, but we l a great run at it," ter Ben Wallace l Saturday night after the Pistons' 102-82 to the New Jersey s.

When asked if being pt hurt, Wallace tated for a second l appeared close to rs.

"If you're human, are going to feel a c pain," he said. it you get over it and will make you nger."

The Pistons had the best regu- season record in the confer- e at 50-32, then showed ghness in the playoffs by rally- from a 3-1 deficit in the open- round against Orlando and ting Philadelphia in six games he second.

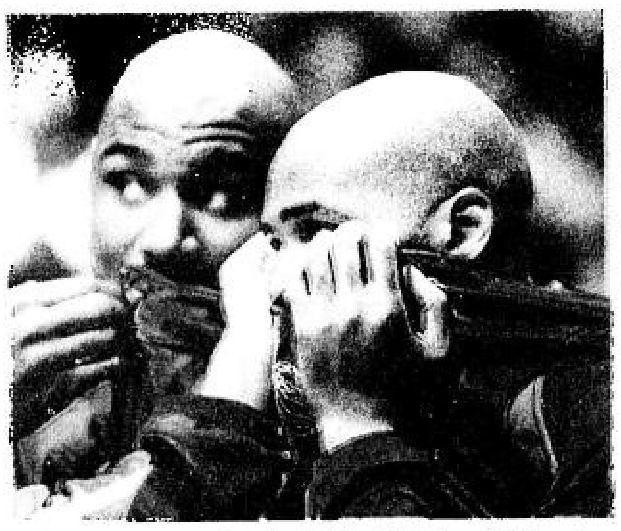
Detroit had its chances in the two games in this series, but each at home by two points.

After that, the Nets were just too strong in winning their second straight conference title.

"I definitely think we take something out of this," Pistons forward Clifford Robinson said. "We know if we get the opportunity to get here again, guys will understand that each step you take is harder. It doesn't get easier. You have to embrace it and work for it and work to take advantage of the opportunity."

Losing the first two games at home hurt.

"This series came down to the first two games," guard Jon Barry said. "If we get one of those games it's different. You lose the first two games at home and it's awfully difficult to come back."



DETROIT Pistons' Chucky Atkins (right) and Michael Curry look forlorn on the bench. AP

To a man, the Pistons said they did too much standing around, which allowed the Nets to clamp down on them defensively.

"We did the same thing that got us in trouble in the Orlando series," point guard Chucky Atkins. "Guys were trying to make plays on the strong side of the court and it's difficult to do that against a team is overplaying everything that way. We had to move the ball and we didn't."

Having point guard Chauncey Billups play the entire series with a sprained ankle also hurt. He shot 11-for-40 for the series and that wasn't nearly good enough going against Jason Kidd and the Nets' fast-break offense.

Too many misses lead to too many fast breaks.

"We have to find a way to get some easy baskets," Billups said of the Pistons, who were outscored 94-15 on the break. *AP*

Leslie sparks Sparks victory over Suns

UNCASVILLE, Connecticut—Opening their season in a casino, the Los Angeles Sparks went with the safe move. They got the ball to Lisa Leslie down low.

Leslie had 18 points, 10 rebounds and four blocked shots to lead the defending champions past the Connecticut Sun 82-73 Saturday.

The Connecticut team, formerly the Orlando Miracle, made its debut at the Mohegan Sun casino. The team was purchased and relocated by the Mohegan Indian tribe, becoming the first independent owner in the seven-year history of the league.

The resort is hoping to capitalize on the strong interest in women's basketball in Connecticut. Geno Auriemma, coach of the four-time NCAA women's champion UConn Huskies, was among the sellout crowd of 9,341.

Mwadi Mabika led Los Angeles with 19 points, and DeLisha Milton added 17. Former UConn star Nykesha Sales had 16 points and 10 rebounds for the Sun, and Shannon Johnson and Katie Douglas also scored 16 points. Lynx 72, Monarchs 71

In Minneapolis, Katie Smith made a free throw with 8.7 seconds left as Minnesota won its first game under coach Suzie McConnell Serio.

Smith scored 13 of her 15 points in the second half. Svetlana Abrosimova led Minnesota with 23 points, but had only four in the second half. Tangela Smith led Sacramento (1-1) with 24 points. Silver Stars 65, Storm 56

In San Antonio, San Antonio won its WNBA opener, beating Seattle behind Marie Ferdinand's 20-point performance.

The San Antonio franchise, formerly the Utah Starzz, relocated to San Antonio during the offseason because of lagging attendance in Salt Lake City. The team, a charter member of the WNBA, advanced to the Western Conference finals last season.

Margo Dydek, the 7-foot-2 center from Poland, added 15 points and eight rebounds for the Silver Stars. Lauren Jackson scored 15 points for Seattle (0-2).

In Phoenix, Sheryl Swoopes scored 14 of Houston's last 22 points as the Comets beat Phoenix.

Swoopes had 23 points and seven assists for the Comets, who won for the second time despite missing starters Tiffani Johnson and Tina Thompson. *AP*

Van Gundy or Silas for Cavaliers

CLEVELAND—The Cleveland Cavaliers got the player they've always wanted. Now, can they get the coveted coach?

Jeff Van Gundy and Paul Silas main the leading candidates to b come the Cavaliers' next coach, general manager Jim Paxson said Friday.

One of them also will be the first pro coach for LeBron James, the high school star the Cavaliers will take with the first overall pick in the June 26 draft. Cleveland got the rights to James by winning the lottery drawing Thursday night.

Van Gundy is the club's preferred choice, but the former New York Knicks coach is waiting to explore other opportunities before deciding whether to return to the NBA.

Van Gundy denied a report that he is headed to Cleveland.

"There's no agreement. There's nothing," the analyst for TNT said during the first half of Friday's Game 3 between San Antonio and Dallas. "They (Cavs) are still in the process of finding a coach."

In addition to Cleveland, there are vacancies in New Orleans, Toronto, with the Los Angeles Clippers and in Houston after Rudy Tomjanovich stepped down Friday. *AP*

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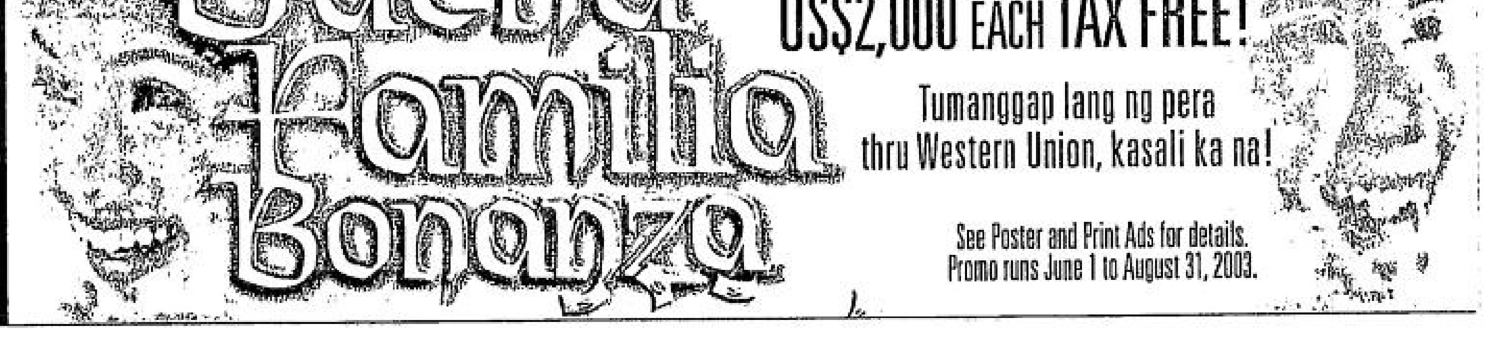

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FIRST TITLE

Chile netters snatch World Team Cup

CHILE'S tennis players Fernando Gonzalez, bottom, and Nicolas Massu jubilate after they won the Tennis World Team Championships 2003 in Dusseldorf, western Germany, Saturday. They defeated the team of Czech Republic 6-4, 6-2. Chile won the championship 2-1. AP

DUESSELDORF, Germany—Chile clinched their first World Team Cup title on Saturday after Fernando Gonzalez and Nicolas Massu teamed up to beat Jiri Novak and Radek Stepanek in the deciding doubles for a 2-1 victory over the Czech Republic.

Gonzalez gave Chile the lead with a 7-6, 7-6 win over Novak, but Stepanek beat Marcelo Rios 6-3, 7-6 to level the tie.

The Chilean pair then overpowered Novak and Stepanek 6-4, 6-2 to win the trophy in Chile's fourth appearance in the event.

"It is great to be champions," Rios said. "It is a great victory for Fernando and Nicolas, it will be good for them at this stage of their careers and will help them. If it wasn't for them I don't think we would have won this week."

Gonzalez, who became the first man to win all eight of his matches since John McEnroe led the US to victory in 1984, gave Chile the perfect start, despite finding himself 4-0 down after just nine minutes.

A break of serve in the fifth game settled his nerves and another helped him force a tiebreak, which he took 7-4.

Rain forced the players off court for an hour during the second set and when they returned, Novak forged ahead again but when he served for the set at 5-4, Gonzalez showed great resolve to break back.

Novak saved two match points at 5-6 to force a second tiebreak but Gonzalez clinched victory on his third match point.

After Chile's win over defending champions Argentina on Friday, Rios had warned that he could struggle against Stepanek, and so it proved as the Czech's guile took him to the first set in 30 minutes.

Rios, who impressed in his victory over Gaston Gaudio on Friday, broke Stepanek to lead 3-1 in the second set only to hand the break back to the Czech in the next game.

Games then stayed on serve until the 11th when, after saving two break points with some brave play, Rios netted a forehand to give Stepanek the chance to serve out for victory.

However, Rios took advantage of his third break point to level at 6-6 and force a tiebreak but Stepanek raced into a 5-0 lead and held on to win it 7-5 and clinch a 6-3 7-6 victory.

Novak and Stepanek had won all three of their doubles rubbers going into the deciding match but Gonzalez and Massu were inspired as they raced to a 5-2 lead in the opening set.

The Czechs got one of the breaks back but the Chileans held their nerve to clinch it 6-4 and they continued their aggressive tennis to race to a 5-1 lead in the second set.

Novak and Stepanek postponed the inevitable by holding serve for 5-2 but after wasting their first two match points, the Chileans clinched victory on their third. *Reuters*

Rubin scores in Madrid

MADRID—Top seed Chanda Rubin claimed her first WTA tour title of the season with a 6-4, 5-7, 6-4 victory over Maria Sanchez Lorenzo of Spain in the $170,000 Madrid Open claycourt tournament on Saturday.

The world number eight, who was runner-up to fellow American Monica Seles in last year's tournament, was given a tough work-out by the 25-year-old Spaniard, who had been given a wild card entry to her home tournament.

"It wasn't my best game of the week," said the 27-year-old American after her victory. "But the important thing was that I battled through to win and it's a very good feeling to take the title at the end of the week.

"This was a chance to show that I am one of the top 10 players in the world and although I may have won bigger tournaments in the past, it was very important for me to win on clay." *Reuters*

SPORTSWATCH

Bacolod bet scores twin kill

BACOLOD—Hometown bet pride Gerard Bergavera edged Jansie Cusay 6-3, 7-5 to bag the boys' 16-under division then whipped Ian Filoteo 6-3, 6-1 in the boys' 14-under class to dominate the Adidas Tennis Challenge 2003 recently at the Negros Occidental Tennis Association (Nota) claycourts here. Bergavera became a double titlist together with Tao Yee Tan, who tripped Gioley Sagansay, 7-6, 6-2 in the girls 14-under and downed Angelica Napiere 6-1, 6-1 in the girls' 12-under; and Len Rodriguez copped the girls' 18-under and 16-under titles in the Adidas netfest organized by CTW and supported by Wilson balls, Milo and Sports Kids with Philta sanction. Bergavera, Tan and Rodriguez shared the limelight with Arnold Rodriguez in the boys' 18-under; Mark Umadhay in the boys' 12-under; and Genesis Pavillar in the unisex 10-under divisions. Nota president Dr. Severo Lacson supported the Adidas Tennis Challenge 2003 together with Philta R-6 vice president Mayor Rex Jaindoon.

Delavin, Mamawal lead winners

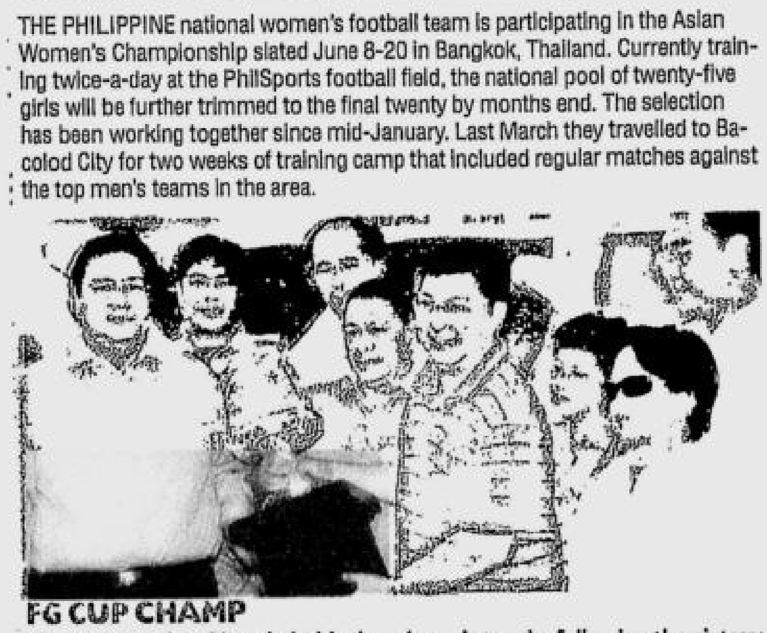
PUERTO Princesa—Promising local netter Randy Delavin blanked Aldrin Jimenez, 6-0, 6-0, and fancied Jopy Mamawal routed Justin Acosta, 6-2, 6-1, to lead the boys' 14-under division winners Saturday in the 2003 Milo Junior Tennis Cup & Regional Workshop here at the Puerto Princesa City Tennis Club in Palawan. Delavin and Mamawal advanced into the quarterfinal with Ben Panaguiton, a 7-5, 6-2 victor past Gerson Anchebeque; Kenneth Tieke, who ousted Richard Abrea 6-4, 6-2; Kent Concepcion, a 7-6, 6-2 winner over Don Pediapco; and Jeric Daide, who whipped Allan Ordinario, 6-4, 6-3. Other first day winners in the Milo netfest organized by CTW and supported by Wilson balls, adidas and Sports Kids with Philta Group-3 sanction were Kenneth Cervantes and Mark dela Chica.

2 derbies slated at Mandaluyong

TWO big derbies will be held at Mandaluyong Coliseum this week. Optimum Property Management Inc. (OPMI) announced that the Ucap Matchmaker 4-cock derby will be staged tomorrow (May 27) and will be hosted by longtime partners Goody Lamboloto and Ariel Garovillo. Entry fee is P10,000 and minimum bet is P5,500. Submission of weights is today (May 26), from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Interested parties may contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 534-4110 and 535-2341. To follow immediately is the Abu 4-cock derby on May 29 offering a guaranteed prize of P400,000 with an entry fee of P11,000. Host is popular *llamador* Abu Centeno. Sponsors are Sagupaan Hammer, Sagupaan Mite Free, Sagupaan B-50 Forten and Washout Shampoo from Lakpue Drug Inc.

RP women's football team ready

THE PHILIPPINE national women's football team is participating in the Asian Women's Championship slated June 8-20 in Bangkok, Thailand. Currently training twice-a-day at the PhilSports football field, the national pool of twenty-five girls will be further trimmed to the final twenty by months end. The selection has been working together since mid-January. Last March they travelled to Bacolod City for two weeks of training camp that included regular matches against the top men's teams in the area.



FG CUP CHAMP

Horse owner Jun Almeda holds the winner's trophy following the victory of Golden Ballet in the recent third First Gentleman Silver Cup at Santa Ana. No less than President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and race honoree First Gentleman Mike Arroyo graced the occasion. Also shown are PCSO race committee vice chair Raul Ancheta, PRCI president Solomon Cua, race committee chair Jose Malang, PCSO chair Ma. Livia "Honeygirl" de Leon and Philracom chair Jaime Dilag.

Chinese netter shines with '3-peat' in Paris

WANGNAN: "I believe in my chances."

PARIS—China's Wang Nan became only the second player to win three world titles in succession when she beat compatriot and doubles partner Zhang Yining at the world championships on Saturday.

Wang, world ranked number two, won 4-3 against the current number one, a winner of two World Cups.

The victory allowed her to emulate compatriot Chinese Deng Yaping, the only triple world champion before her in 1991, 1995 and 1997.

"I learnt a lot from watching Deng play. But I don't think I can be compared to her. She won two Olympic golds in 1992 and 1996. I only have one," she said. "We'll see how it goes in Athens."

Wang's victory was hard fought. She had a perfect start, leading 3-0, before pressure started to mount and she let Zhang back into the match.

"We were both prepared to meet in the final and to fight to the finish. We know each other very well and I can tell where each of her balls is going to go.

"At one time, I let pressure or emotion take over. But I kept believing in my chances," added 24-year-old Wang who hinted she might retire after next year's Athens Games.

In the last four, she defeated Croatian Tamara Boros, the last European left in the tournament.

On Friday, Wang had also won the mixed doubles gold with compatriot Ma Lin and she will be favorite for the women's doubles title with Zhang on Sunday.

In the men's doubles, Chinese Wang Liquin and Yan Sen beat compatriots Wang Hao and Kong Linghui 4-2. *Reuters*

Braves spoil Glavine return to Turner Field

ATLANTA—The Atlanta Braves breezed past the New York Mets 10-4 in the National League on Saturday to make it an unhappy Turner Field return for Tom Glavine.

Gary Sheffield homered, had three hits and drove in three runs for the Braves while Robert Fick added a three-run homer and Rafael Furcal had two hits and drove in two runs.

Glavine (5-4) allowed six runs on eight hits over 3 1/3 innings after being met by a smattering of boos on his return to the city where he starred for 16 seasons.

He allowed homers to Javy Lopez and Andruw Jones and left the game during a seven-run fourth inning that made it 10-0.

"Everything about it, coming from the other side, was different," Glavine told reporters. "With all the attention surrounding this day, it was difficult for anything to feel normal."

"I don't think my emotions factored into the way that I pitched," Glavine said, although he added he had "a sense of relief that this is over". He was bothered by a blister on his pitching hand after the first inning and the Braves took advantage.

Horacio Ramirez (4-2) went seven innings, allowing two runs on four hits with four strikeouts and two walks for the win.

Tsuyoshi Shinjo had three hits for the Mets while Ty Wigginton had two hits and scored two runs.

In Denver, Pedro Feliz homered for the second straight game as Barry Bonds' replacement to guide the San Francisco Giants to a 5-1 triumph over the Colorado Rockies.

Felix's three-run homer in the sixth inning broke a scoreless tie. Bonds was injured Friday and is not expected to play again in this series.

Marquis Grissom had four hits to lead the Giants, now an NL-best 18-8 on the road.

Kurt Ainsworth (4-4) surrendered a run on four hits over seven innings with four strikeouts and one walk. Scott Elarton (1-1) allowed three runs on seven hits in six innings and took the loss.

Todd Helton had two hits for Colorado.

In Milwaukee, Hideo Nomo pitched a complete game two-hitter and Fred McGriff had a grand slam as the Los Angeles Dodgers blanked the Brewers 6-0. *Reuters*

BASEBALL RESULTS

AL—Boston 12, Cleveland 3; Kansas City 3, Oakland 1; Toronto 5, NY Yankees 2 ; Anaheim 7, Tampa Bay 2; Detroit 1, Chicago White Sox 0; Baltimore 10, Texas 3; Minnesota 7, Seattle 2

NL—Atlanta 10, NY Mets 4; San Francisco 5, Colorado 1; St. Louis 6, Pittsburgh 0; Los Angeles 6, Milwaukee 0; Montreal 3, Philadelphia 2; Chicago Cubs 3, Houston 2; Florida 5, Cincinnati 4; San Diego 5, Arizona 1

Nat'l slugfest gets under way

By Dennis Eroa

PUERTO PRINCESA—More than 100 men and women from across the country will vie for honors in the prestigious National Open Men and Women Amateuur Boxing Championships which formally opened Sunday at the Puerto Princesa Coliseum here.

Young, aspiring boxers will meet national team members even as local talents hope to take their first step to national glory in this week-long slugfest sanctioned by the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines and supported by the Palawan under the leadership of Gov. Joel T. Reyes.

The tournament will also serve as qualifying for those trying to enter the national training pool. This event slugfest was postponed twice due to scheduling problems but was given a green light after the Philippine Sports Commission decided to shelve the Palarong Pambansa. The delay, however, gave the hosts more time to prepare and lure more pugs to participate in the event.

"This is a dream come true for the province of Palawan. We are honored to host this event which will serve as springboard for the youth to attain national glory.

Our search for an Olympic gold will be boosted with this event," said Gov. Reyes during the short opening ceremonies.

Deep field in Indy 500

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana—After a month of hype, controversy, speculation and intrigue, race day at the Indianapolis 500 arrives Sunday with one of the deepest fields in its history.

With just enough car and driver combinations to fill the 33-car starting lineup, quality, not quantity, is the key ingredient to this year's field.

With many of the top teams from Championship Auto Racing Teams (CART) moving over to the Indy Racing League IndyCar series the past two years, the power shift has created a very competitive environment for this year's race.

"While I believe you could say there is an asterisk behind the winner's names from 1996-2000, but you certainly can't say that any more," said 1986 winner Bobby Rahal, a team owner in both the IRL and CART. "Everybody who is anybody is here." At the top of that list is Helio Castroneves, who attempts to make history by becoming the driver to win the world's most famous race three years in a row.

In his quest for a "Three-peat," Castroneves will start from the pole position after running a four-lap average of 231.725 miles per hour on May 11. He will compete in a Dallara/Toyota for team owner Roger Penske, who has a record 12 Indy 500 poles. *AFP*

THE EVOLUTION OF A HAIR TRANSPLANT PROCEDURE.

BEFORE HAIR TRANSPLANT

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Promo Mechanics:

1. For a minimum single receipt purchase of any of the following Caltex products, you get one (1) game card:P300 worth of fuels (Vortex Gold, Vortex Silver, Regular, Power Diesel & Kerosene); P75 worth of items at Star Mart; P75 worth of Lubricants; P250 worth of LPG

How to win:

Instant Prize:

a. Scratch off the three (3) big boxes to reveal the following Unilever and Caltex products: Cream Silk logo (three 10mL. sachets); Caltex fuel (P100.00 worth); Caltex fuel (P50.00 worth); Caltex (P10.00 worth); Caltex Lubricant (P20.00 worth)
b. If the three (3) big boxes reveal the same items, you win the prize indicated on the card.
c. Instant prizes can be claimed at any participating Caltex station from Monday-Friday, from 9.00 am - 5:00 pm, upon surrender of the winning game card.
d. Instant prizes are not convertible to cash.
e. The P20 Caltex Lubricant instant prize cannot be used to redeem 200mL., Caltex Revtex 250, Caltex 2T oil and battery water.
f. Game cards are subject to validation by the authorized Caltex station representative. Only winning cards with authenticated security code will be honored. Crumpled, defaced, torn or with scratched security code game cards ("void if scratched" box) will be disqualified.
g. Instant prizes may be claimed until 60 days from the end of the promo or until November 26, 2003. All unclaimed prizes will be forfeited in favor of Caltex (Philippines) Inc. with prior approval of DTI.

Raffle:

a. Fill-out the raffle coupon. Indicate your name, address, tel. no., and/or cell no. and affix your signature on the raffle stub.
b. Drop entries in drop boxes located at any participating Caltex station.

Monthly Raffle:

a. There will be three (3) monthly draws: four (4) major prize winners and 40 consolation prize winners to be drawn in each monthly draw
b. Entries will be clustered into four (4) groups: GMA, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.
c. Allocation of prizes per area are as following:
   - Major Prize Winners: one (1) will be picked from GMA, one (1) from Luzon, one (1) from Visayas and one (1) from Mindanao. Consolation Prize Winners: two (2) will be picked from GMA Pasig, Mandaluyong, Pateros, Marikina, Rizal, Manila, San Juan, Makati, Pasay City, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela; two (2) from North Luzon (Ilocos, Mt. Province, Abra, La Union, Benguet, Pangasinan, Cagayan, Ifugao, Isabela, Quirino, Kalinga Apayao, Nueva Vizcaya, Nueva Ecija, Aurora, Pampanga, Tarlac, Bataan, Zambales, Bulacan, two (2) from South Luzon (Batangas, Cavite, Mindoro, Laguna, Quezon, Palawan and Marinduque); two (2) from Visayas & two (2) from Mindanao.
d. The major prize winners will be announced over Caltex's "Win Wheels Baby, Win!" segment in EAT BULAGA, GMA 7's noontime TV show and will be notified through registered mail and telephone
e. The major prize winners wins a cash prize of TEN THOUSAND PESOS (P10,000.00) and will be treated to four days and three nights accomomodation for two at a hotel in Manila, with land, sea or air transport and dining privileges. Additional trip prize package is transferable, but is not convertible to cash
f. Consolation prize winners in P5,000.00 cash.
g. Only winning entries with the authenticated security code will be honored.
h. Non-winning entries in each monthly draw will no longer be included in the succeeding monthly draws but will be qualified for the grand draw.
i. The major prize winners will also play in Caltex's "Win Wheels Baby, Win!" Segment within EAT BULAGA, GMA 7's noontime TV show. He/She has the option to let another person play in his/her place, provided a written agreement is submitted to Caltex prior to the "Win Wheels Baby, Win!" game proper.
j. Before the Win Wheels Baby, Win! game proper the major prize winners will also be interviewed by the network to determine his/her interests and profile. Thereafter, a fitting "Win Wheels Baby, Win!" game mechanics, questions and challenges will be tailor-fit based on information secured.
k. The major prize winners will also be asked to accomplish a waiver stipulating that they are in good health, condition to participate in any game challenge he/she is tasked to accomplish.
l. Agreements on any winnings will be between the major prize winner and the authorized person to play in the game which will be indicated in the agreement with the authorized player to be submitted to Caltex. In case there are no specific instructions in the agreement regarding in sharing of any winnings, the prize will be awarded to the authorized player.

Schedule of raffle draws and game:

Period Covered	Deadline of Submission	Draw Dates	Schedule of "Win Wheels Baby, Win"
1st Draw: May 26 to June 29	June 29	July 9	July 18, 25, Aug. 01, 08
2nd Draw: June 30 to July 27	July 27	Aug. 6	Aug. 15, 22, 29, Sept. 5
3rd Draw: July 28 to Aug. 24	Aug. 24	Sept. 3	Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3

Game Mechanics:

- In the game proper, contestant will be presented with Seven (7) Caltex brands' logos - Caltex, Vortex, Power Diesel, Star Mart, Star Card, LPG, and Caltex Delo.
- All seven (7) boxes contain different number of keys ranging from one (1) to three (3). To wit:

  1 Box - 3 keys
  3 Boxes - 2 keys
  3 Boxes - 1 key

- Contestant will choose three(3) boxes. Inside the boxes are questions or challenges that the contestant must do to earn the money and the number of chances to pick from a bowl of keys.
- Contestant will then position the boxes in the P20,000; P35,000; and the P50,000 slots.
- Contestant earns the cash and the number of chances to pick from a bowl of keys, if he answers the questions or is able to do the challenge. If the contestant is not able to answer any of the three questions or challenges, the contestant receives P10,000 consolation prize, plus one (1) chance to pick from a bowl of keys.
- For the jackpot round, contestant picks from a bowl of fifty(50) keys. The number of times that he/she will draw were already discussed in the former provisions.
- Only one (1) of the fifty(50) keys is the key to the jackpot prize.
- Contestant tries his/her luck to start the engine of the jackpot prize.
- Should it start, contestant drives home the Brand New Mitsubishi Adventure GLS Sport!

Grand Raffle:

a. There will be one (1) Grand Draw to be held at the end of the 12-week "Win Wheels Baby, Win!" at EAT BULAGA.
b. The grand draw will simply be a showcase of the drawing of winners and culled from the entries received within the promo period. All non-winning entries on the monthly draws plus entries submitted from September 1 to 26, 2003 will be segregated into GMA, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao for the grand draw.
c. Entries will be clustered into three (3) groups: GMA and Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.
d. Prizes at stake include:
   - Seven (7) brand new Mitsubishi Adventure Super Sport
   - Fifty (50) winners of P5,000 each
e. Allocation of winners per area are as following:
   - Adventure: three (3) will be picked from Luzon (includes GMA, North & South Luzon), two (2) fromVisayas and two (2) from Mindanao.
   - P5,000.00 Cash: thirty (30) will be picked from Luzon (includes GMA, North & South Luzon, ten (10) from Visayas and ten (10) from Mindanao.
f. Drawn winners will be notified through registered mail and telephone.
h. Schedule of the grand draw is:

Period Covered	Deadline submission of Entries	Draw Date
May 26, 2003 to September 26, 2003	September 26, 2003	October 10, 2003

2. Customer can only win one weekly prize during the promo period and can only win once in the grand draw. In case the winner gets drawn again on the same draw date, he/she gets the bigger prize
3. Prizes can be claimed upon presentation of one (1) proper identification (i.e. driver's license, passport, etc.) and notification letter.
4. Prizes may be claimed at 7/F 6750 Ayala Ave., 1226 Makati City Philippines from Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm only. Consolation prizes can be claimed at the nearest Caltex station specified in the registered notice.
5. Prizes can be claimed within 60 days of notification. All prizes unclaimed will be forfeited in favor of Caltex (Philippines) Inc. with prior approval of DTI.
6. Caltex shall shoulder the 20% tax for prizes exceeding P10,000.00
7. Employees of Caltex (Philippines) Inc., participating Caltex stations Caltex lubricant distributors, LPG dealers, affiliated Advertising Agencies, Caltex promotions and partner agencies, suppliers and all their relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the raffle promo.
8. Promo period is from May 26, 2003 to September 26, 2003

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WIN WHEELS BABY, WIN!

Promo Period: May 26 to September 26, 2003
Per DTI-NCR Permit No 0341, Series of 2003

What Drives You CALTEX

Annika back to where she belongs

FORT WORTH, Texas—Annika Sorenstam was back home on Saturday, and on her way back to the LPGA, where the world's top woman golfer said she "belonged" after her appearance in the PGA Tour's Colonial.

Whether Sorenstam's foray onto the men's tour, which created such debate and sparked such intense scrutiny, will be remembered as truly groundbreaking remains to be seen.

Certainly she won over a legion of new fans, including at least a few among the PGA Tour players.

"Some of them will say I told you so. Others will say she's just nothing but class, and frankly I'm in that camp," said Dan Forsman, who shared the halfway lead in the tournament as Sorenstam missed the cut with a five-over total of 145.

She finished ahead of 11 men in the field of 111, and was tied with four. But though Sorenstam showed she could hold her own as she became the first woman in 58 years to play on the PGA Tour, few male players believed that showed a woman could compete consistently on the PGA Tour.

"Week-in, week-out, they would get killed out here, say if the top 10 women played," Mark Calcavecchia said, even as he praised Sorenstam's performance. "They would get run over week-in, week-out." Indeed Sorenstam herself chose Colonial as a course she thought would suit her game. And if her appearance does unleash, as some have warned, a stampede of women demanding to play the men's tour, Sorenstam won't be among them.

"I do think that if a lady is good enough to either get an invite or, if she went to tour school or Monday qualifying, she should have any right to come here," Sorenstam said. "In my case, this is not something I want to keep pushing and pushing. I know where I want to play.

"I have other goals I want to achieve. I've got three more majors on my tour that I want to win, and other records that I want to beat." That doesn't necessarily quiet the fears of those opposed to any gender-bending appearances by women on the PGA Tour, since Suzy Whaley qualified last year to play the Greater Hartford Open, and 13-year-old Michelle Wie is slated to play later this year in a Nationwide Tour event and has made no secret of her desire to play on the PGA Tour.

Tom Pernice, a player-member of the PGA Tour's policy board, said this week that he expected tour decision makers to discuss the possibility of changing the bylaws to prohibit women, although David Toms, one of his colleagues on the policy board, said he didn't think such a change was imminent. *AFP*

Perry gives fans something to cheer

FORT WORTH, Texas—Kenny Perry fired a course record-equalling 61 Saturday to take a commanding eight-stroke lead in the Colonial and give fans deprived of Annika Sorenstam someone new to cheer.

Perry said Friday that few followed his morning round because they were "all waiting for Annika." But he said plenty of those captivated by the Swedish LPGA star had apparently returned after she missed the cut.

"I had a huge gallery," he said. "I think they're hanging around."

They were rewarded with a stellar effort from Perry, a 42-year-old tour veteran with four victories to his credit, who admitted thoughts of 59 flashed through his mind more than once on Saturday.

"When I had the birdie putt on 15, I'm thinking if I can make this putt, I've got a very good shot at shooting 59," said Perry, who opened and closed the front nine with bursts of three straight birdies, and birdied 11, 14 and 17 coming in.

He missed the 12-footer for birdie at 15, and a 10-footer at 16.

"After I missed that little putt on 16, I knew it was virtually impossible," Perry said of a sub-60 round.

But he enjoyed limelight, which he said hasn't come his way too often.

His 61 tied Keith Clearwater, Lee Janzen and Greg Kraft for the lowest at the Colonial. His 17-under 193 also improved the 54-hole tournament mark shared by Scott Simpson and David Ogrin by one.

Nevertheless, he couldn't have been happier with a round in which missed just one fairway.

Along with the near-misses on 15 and 16, Perry nearly holed a 35-footer for birdie at the 12th.

Perry, runner-up to Zimbabwe's Nick Price here last year, said going into the final round with a big lead was an unusual experience for him.

South African Rory Sabbatini was lying second after a 67 for nine-under 201. Jim Furyk shot 69 for 202, and three players shared fourth place on 203: Jeff Sluman (67), Stewart Cink (66) and Hal Sutton—whose hole-in-one at the 16th highlighted a 65.

"I think catching him is going to be a really tough thing to do," Sabbatini said of Perry. *AFP*

LEADER REUTERS
Catriona Matthew reads the green on 17 during the LPGA Corning Classic in Corning, New York on Sunday. Matthew fired a five-under-par 67 on Saturday to take a 2-stroke lead after 54 holes and put some working room between her and playing partner Lorie Kane.

South African up by 2 shots

VIRGINIA WATER, England—Trevor Immelman shot a brilliant 64 on Saturday to secure a two-stroke lead to take into the final round of the Volvo PGA Championship at Wentworth.

But the South African faces a battle-royal to win by far the biggest title of his career with his mentor and compatriot Ernie Els among those gunning for him.

Also lined up in striking distance are second-placed Swede Niclas Fasth, Colin Montgomerie, Nick Faldo, Ian Woosnam and the burgeoning young talent of British golf, Paul Casey.

But Immelman, who paid tribute to the help given early in his career by his childhood hero Els, should prove a hard man to catch. *Reuters*

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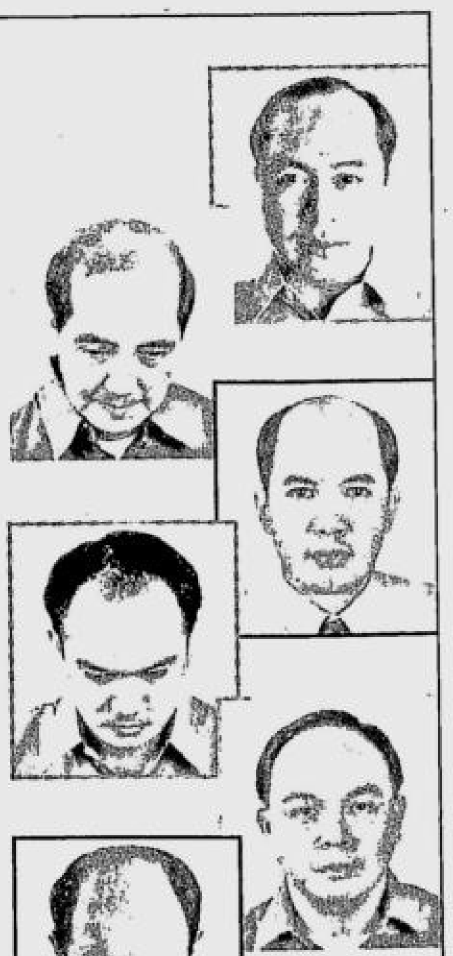

Svenson Answers Your Hair Loss & Baldness Questions

Q. Does hair loss occur only among older men?
A. There is a misconception that only old men go bald---wrong! On the contrary, some men will lose their hair more quickly than others between the ages of 18 to 30. This is when the rate of hair loss seems to be most active. That's why hair loss is primarily a young man's problem. Some men retain their hair until their late 50's where some diffuse thinning occurs due to cell-aging.

Q. What is the main cause of hair loss?
A. Hair loss is governed by the male hormone testosterone that a young male starts to produce at puberty. As a result, the voice deepens, hair grows on the chest and face, but it also brings about a reduction of hair on the front and crown areas of the head. This is due to the interaction of an enzyme (5-alpha-reductase) that converts testosterone into a potent androgen called **Dihydrotestosterone (DHT)**. It makes the hair growth cycle shorter until you're left with very fine hair stubble or even nothing at all.

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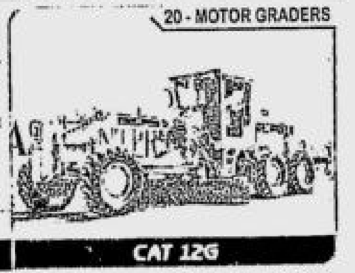

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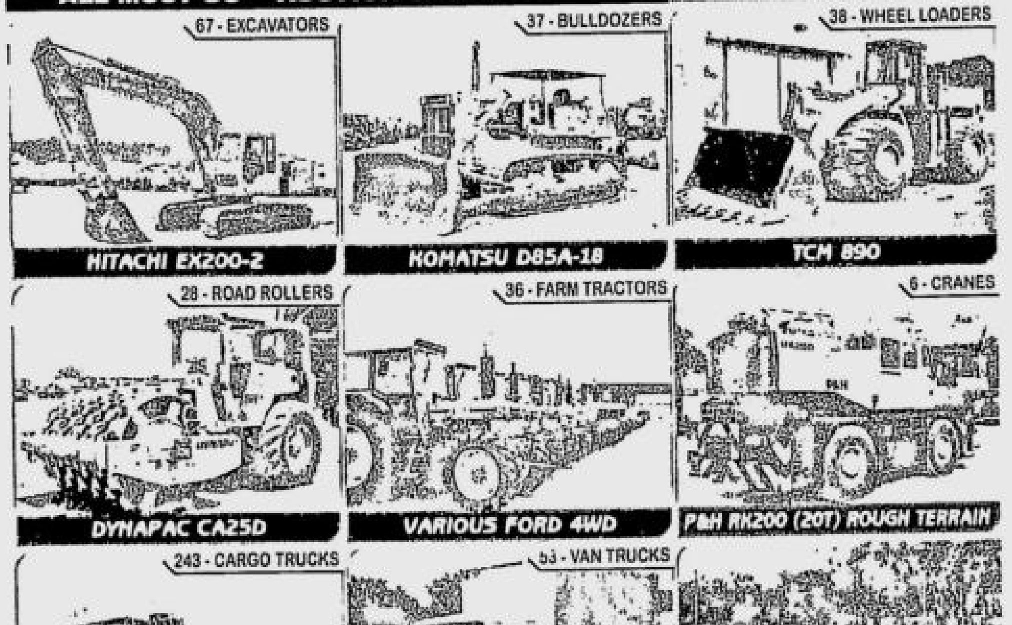

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Investor sentiment in RP turns bullish

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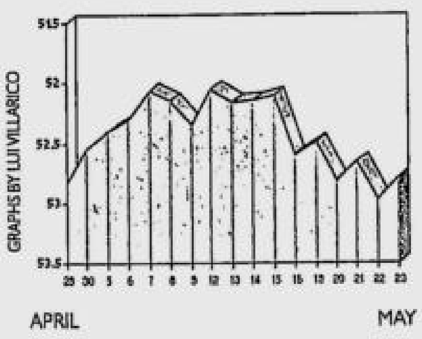

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

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As of 5 p.m., May 23, 2003

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As of 5 p.m., May 23, 2003

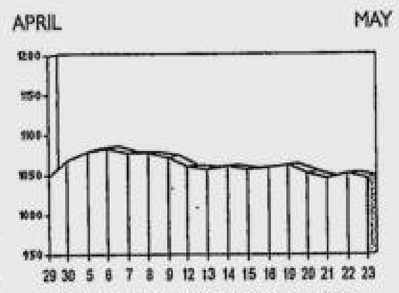
GOLD: $366.00-366.50

per ounce Hong Kong, May 23, 2003

STOCK MARKET

Bearish sentiment seen

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

A GENERAL lack of appetite to buy stocks is expected to bring the market sideways.

Most investors were also waiting for the government's official release of its first-quarter economic performance this week for firmer signals.

Traders said the country's first quarter economic performance, due to be released on May 29, could dictate the market's direction next week.

Some analysts said the peso might also be contributing to the nonactivity in the market. The local currency has been depreciating anew, a factor seen deterring market players at the moment. The peso hit a one-month low last Thursday but firmed a bit on Friday to reach a high of 52.83 per dollar against its previous onshore close of 52.97.

The main index of the Philippine Stock Exchange closed last week at 1,047.34 points or 12.19 points below the previous week and was seen to move sideways with a slight bearish bias.

BPI Securities said the market should remain range-bound in the absence of positive local developments.

"Investors remain cautious given the uncertainties such as the terrorist attacks abroad. It is awaiting the release of first-quarter GDP (gross domestic product) figures (this) week," the stock brokerage said.

Government officials have expressed optimism that domestic economic growth reached 4.6 percent in the first quarter of this year but most investors were waiting on the sidelines for the official release.

BPI Securities noted that disappointment over first-quarter earnings had put the brakes on an emerging rally and tipped the market

BEARISH/ B6

By Doris C. Dumlao

BUSINESS sentiment in the Philippines has turned bullish in the second quarter of the year despite the regional hysteria over the SARS viral outbreak, but this was not enough to expand onshore job opportunities, the latest Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas survey showed.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the institution's business expectation survey (BES) conducted in April up to early May showed a positive reversal of the overall business outlook diffusion index to 4 percent from -3 percent in the first quarter.

The respondents in the BSP's quarterly survey—drawn randomly from top 5,000 corporations based in Metro Manila—cited the speedy resolution of the US-led war in Iraq, the recovery of the peso against the dollar and the downtrend in oil prices as the reasons behind the positive outlook.

"The shift to a positive index was largely traced to the improved sentiment in the industry, wholesale and retail trade and the other services sectors, which yielded positive diffusion indices for the second quarter," Buenaventura said.

Only the construction sector recorded a negative outlook during the period, he noted.

Business prospects for the third quarter have likewise improved, leading to an increase in the overall business outlook index to 27.6 percent from 17.4 percent in the second quarter.

"Respondents attributed their optimism to the increase in orders from the US, Europe and Asia, and to the increase in domestic demand in anticipation of the opening of the schoolyear," the BSP chief said.

The outlook would have been rosier if not for the SARS outbreak, which replaced the Iraq war as the most pressing concern in the Asia-Pacific region.

"These positive factors were, however, dampened by concerns over the possible adverse effect of

INVESTOR/ B6

Congress seeks to curb President's tariff powers

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

CONGRESS is aiming to put back the power of setting tariffs mainly in legislators' hands by putting the clamps on the President's prerogative to amend duties.

"The exercise of power over tariffs is a question of policy which has a deep impact on the economy. Such an issue must not be left to unelected bureaucrats who have no accountability to the people," said Antique Rep. Exequiel Javier in his explanatory note to House Bill No. 4958.

HB 4958 seeks to amend Section 401 of the Tariff and Customs Code that would limit the President from making tariff changes only when Congress is in compulsory recess after it adjourns "sine die" or without setting a day or time for reassembling.

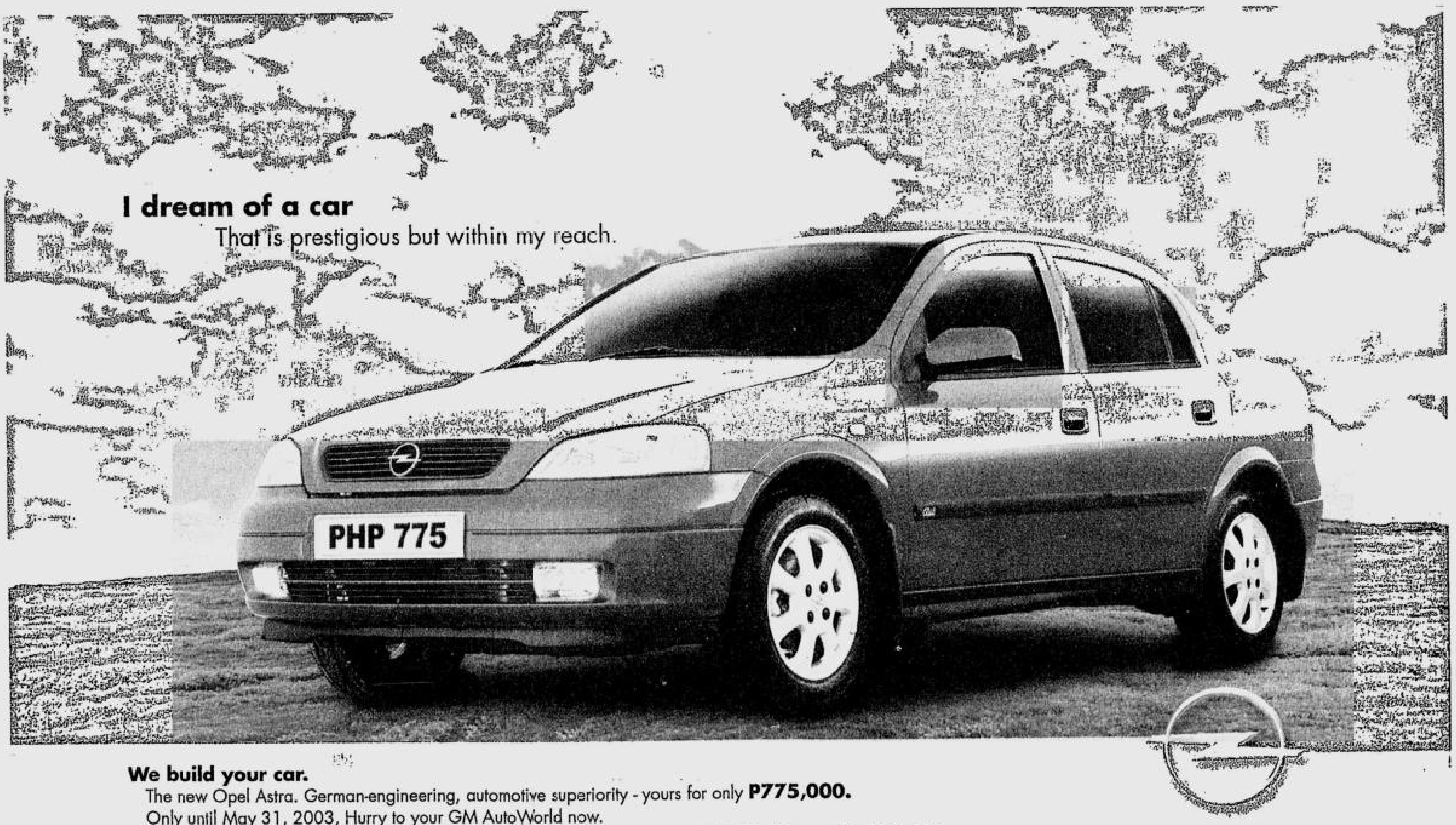
The bill also limits the effective date of the duty amendments to no more than one year, bars the President from granting zero tariff perks or imposing duties on duty-free goods, and gives lawmakers the option to withdraw or terminate the President's power to amend the country's tariff program.

According to Javier, tariff amendments through executive fiat became frequent beginning in 1976 when President Marcos issued PD 1464 wherein he arrogated the power to fix tariff rates whenever he deemed it necessary in the interest of national economy, general welfare and national security.

Javier noted that Marcos issued during his term 107 EOs that set tariff rates and reclassified dutiable articles. His successors also came up with a significant number of tariff changes—President Aquino made 24 EOs, President Ramos signed 46 EOs, President Estrada inked 22 EOS, and President Macapagal-Arroyo approved 15 EOs so far.

Javier said the power over tariffs was a constitutional mandate vested in Congress which it must not shirk and leave to "unelected bureaucrats" to discharge. He said Congress must have a say on trade issues such as whether to lower duties on cement to satisfy consumer interests or raise duties to protect local cement manufacturers.

The move to consolidate Congress' tariff-setting powers has come amid growing resentment among local businessmen on the government's trade liberalization policy that has opened the local market too fast and too soon to competition from more aggressive and developed countries.



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BSP sees BOP deficit this year

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has reversed its balance-of-payment (BOP) projection for this year to a deficit of about $500 million from an original surplus target of $100-$200 million.

In an interview on Friday, BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the agency was now expecting a deficit partly due to some foreign exchange outflow expected to arise from maturing foreign loans of the public sector.

Aside from foreign loan repayments and the government's decision to stick to local borrowings, the lower BOP was expected from slower inflow of foreign exchange from trade and investments.

The BSP's revised projection is a turnaround from the $660-million surplus enjoyed by the country last year.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the local economy and the rest of the world.

Buenaventura noted that there were debt maturities bunching up this year and next year, some of which could be paid using the BSP's gross international reserves (GIR) or using a refinancing facility.

Based on BSP documents, foreign currency loans, deposits

BSP/ B6

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Walking toll

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

YOU will be pleased to learn that, if the rumors going around in business are true, even the rich and famous, or the powerful and influential, also fall for rip-offs.

It was only a P50-million rip-off. Such an amount may be nothing to bigtime business. So I guess it was not the money.

From what I heard, the bosses of the victimized corporations were seething mad. It's just that nobody wants to be taken for a fool.

* * *

BUT more delightful still, aside from the victims of the swindle being gigantic business groups, was the venue of the "set-up."

As any self-respecting con man knows, being the first step in any con job, the "set-up" is the most important part. It's where you hook the victim.

And the "set-up" happened in Malacañang itself. I am not kidding. If the story is true, the con job supposedly took place somewhere outside the Office of the President.

Actually, two members of the Cabinet of this cute administration of Gloriaetta, based on rumors I heard somewhere in Fort Bonifacio in Makati, set it all up.

Not surprisingly, in the business community, the two Cabinet members were said to have been practicing—for some time now—what we know down here as "one money."

* * *

IT seems that those two big business groups had this humongous deal. One was getting a huge business from the other.

The deal even grabbed headlines. The two groups were doing business for the first time. They were forever competing in all their lines of business. Except perhaps banking!

Anyway, before I give away their identities, let me say that somebody whispered to the two Makati-based groups that their deal might need the approval of Gloriaetta.

No problem, because both groups were known to be close to Gloriaetta herself. They supported her in sending home the man named Band ...Wrist Band.

And so, as the story goes, they went to see Gloriaetta personally at the Palace. No, Gloriaetta supposedly told them, they did not need her approval. It was a private deal.

* * *

WAITING right outside the room where Gloriaetta saw the bosses of the two business conglomerates was one Cabinet member.

The Cabinet member supposedly told the businessmen that, despite what Gloriaetta said, they must let the Palace go through their deal.

And the reason was, well, "just to be sure." And that was the "set-up," although at that time, the two groups did not know it yet.

Unfortunately, the other Cabinet member who would, er, "go through" the deal was pretty busy. The other Cabinet member could only "go through" it after one week.

As everybody knew at that time, the two groups had a deadline for their deal. Thanks to the busy schedule of the other Cabinet member, they could not meet it.

* * *

AGAIN, it was not a problem. The other Cabinet member knew somebody else who could, ahh, "go through" the documentation of the deal.

That somebody was also said to be close to Gloriaetta. Unfortunately, Mr. Somebody was in the United States, perhaps vacationing in his million-dollar house.

Several long-distance calls later, it was established that, again, there really was no problem at all. That somebody had another group which could do the job.

This was the same group which, in every nook and crany of business, was known as the "toll collector." Everything passed through it—for a handsome fee, of course.

But based on the horror stories I heard about this "toll collector," you can actually say that the fees were actually done through "e-pass." It was almost automatic.

* * *

BEFORE the two groups could figure out that they fell for the scheme, the "toll collector" was already charging them a little goodwill fee of P50 million.

Let me see if I got it right—wasn't that a private group, going through the deal of two other private groups, for and in behalf of the government?

Don't tell me that this cute administration of Gloriaetta is doing some outsourcing for Palace review work!

Anyway, at least based on our story, the Palace did not have to pay for the service. Those two groups shouldered the toll, este, the fee.

And what are the qualification for such a "deal walking?" You know—making "lakad" a deal. Do you have to be tall? Or do you only have to share the toll?

* * *

IN the stock market, you could hear more bad news for the despairing stockholders of Cyberbay. Somebody else is definitely going to take over the Cyberbay project.

In a decision penned by Justice Antonio Carpio, one of the founders of the Carpio Villaraza Cruz law firm, a.k.a. THE firm, the Supreme Court ruled against Cyberbay.

The company is the former Amari, which in 1995 inked a contract with the government to do a reclamation job at the Manila Bay.

Eight years later, Carpio ruled that the contract was actually null and void, making the stocks of the publicly listed Cyberbay virtually worthless.

But in his ruling, Carpio also said: "The decision does not bar private corporations from participating in reclamation projects and being paid for their services in reclaiming lands."

* * *

NOBODY in the stock market can say if such a line in the Carpio decision, precisely, was the same as what was specified in Cyberbay's contract with the government.

Cyberbay, according to the contract, would be paid with a share of reclaimed land. This, in the first place, was the standard deal in all reclamation projects.

In the stock market, therefore, they are just saying that the decision seemed to lay down the groundwork for a takeover of the Cyberbay project by another group.

Under the takeover plan, based on word going around the market, the reclaimed land would be subdivided for RE-bidding.

Whatever single group will do the actual reclamation job for all those many winners in the bidding—for a fee, of course—will be the luckiest of them all.

* * *

RECENTLY, the Supreme Court also created a big splash when it decided to nullify the contract of Piatco for the airport terminal Naia 3.

At the same time, the Supreme Court decided that another controversial contract, the garbage contract of Jancom, was valid.

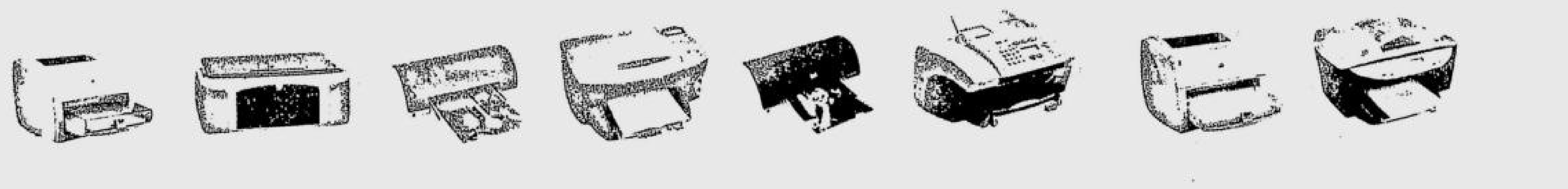
Those fighting the Jancom contract will tell you that its flaws were all well documented. It was on record, for instance, that it never got a Neda approval.

Moreover, they will tell you that the same Justice Carpio's Supreme Court's 3rd Division was hearing the case to nullify the Jancom contract.

And when Carpio was still with THE firm, Jancom happened to be one of his clients. Guess what—Carpio inhibited himself!

Still, the Supreme Court's 3rd Division threw away the petition of some citizens' groups for the court to hear the Jancom case en banc.

Result: The contracts of Piatco and Cyberbay were bad, but that of Jancom's was good. Try to beat that!



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Lorenzo's oil

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

NOW we know how our Favorite Publisher had managed to get himself "invited" to the White House dinner as part of the official GMA entourage.

It was Agriculture Secretary Cito Lorenzo who literally sneaked him into the party.

According to the Malacañang grapevine, Lorenzo brought Favorite Publisher along with him to Malacañang when the agriculture chief went to see the President, despite the Favorite Publisher having already announced in his newspaper column that he had declined an invitation to the "White House state luncheon."

In Malacañang, the Strong Republic crumbled at the first verbal assault of the Favorite Publisher. The Favorite Publisher's inclusion boomeranged on Lorenzo, however, for he had to give up his seat at the White House dinner, along with Energy Secretary Vincent Perez and National Security Adviser Roilo Golez to make way for Mila Drilon, Gina de Venecia and, of course, you know who.

Not content with having himself invited, Favorite Publisher also lobbied to have his travel sidekick/business partner included in the accompanying delegation. His partner, a public relations consultant with a large expense account, was eventually allowed to join the Blair House reception despite resistance from the state visit organizers.

It was Lorenzo who also sneaked in Favorite Publisher in the Monday morning ceremonies at the White House. Apparently, Lorenzo got wind about the three vacancies in the Philippine business delegation, caused by the last-minute cancellation of real estate developer Joey Antonio, investment banker Guillermo Luchangco, and Bert Lina of Airfreight 2100/Federal Express.

There are more White House capers involving our Favorite Publisher but we will stop here, unless Favorite Publisher, like the unremorseful Jayson Blair of The New York Times, keeps on foisting the "tuxedo" fiction.

Resurgent classmate

COMMISSIONER Cynthia Carreon may have left the Philippine Sports Commission under a heavy cloud of doubt but it looks like sunny days again for the GMA classmate.

Carreon was espied among the accompanying government delegation in the just concluded US state visit, causing a few eyebrows to be raised.

After PSC, not many know that Carreon has quietly resurrected as a director at the Department of Tourism, which, presumably, gave the Assumptionista the official cover to join her famous classmate in Washington, DC.

SARS dividend

LIKE the rest of the industry, Northwest Airlines may have lost traffic in the Asian region because of the SARS scare but its Philippine sector is somewhat offsetting the system loss.

Northwest country manager Ray Nishihira would not comment on it but, according to the industry grapevine, the US carrier's Manila-Japan flights are packed these days, especially after Cathay Pacific reduced its Manila-Hong Kong frequency to two from the usual six.

CX has been undercutting Northwest for the huge seamen market, enticing the labor recruitment industry with cheaper fares if they would route their Japan-bound market through Hong Kong via CX. But apparently even the cheap fares are not enough to overcome fears of SARS contagion even though the passengers may only be transitting through the Chinese territory.

In the lucrative business-class market, Northwest hopes to undercut Philippine Airlines and CX not only with competitive fares but with new, fully reclining seats which the US carrier plans to introduce to the Manila-US flights by the fourth quarter.

The fully automated seats, which with their individual canopies afford more personal space and privacy to the passengers, were previewed, tried, and positively received by a group of Philippine travel agents who attended last week's annual Pow Wow convention in St. Louis, Missouri.

Heard through the grapevine

IT was Marsman's George Drysdale who, through Mike Arroyo, organized the Pebble Beach stop of President Macapagal-Arroyo. But the President canceled the golf outing at the 11th hour, fearing that the mischievous media would juxtapose her photo playing by the world-renown course with photos of Mindanao fighting. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

GSIS posts ₱32.2-B net profit

THE GOVERNMENT Service Insurance System (GSIS) earned a net profit of P32.25 billion in 2002 and increased its total assets to P245.9 billion during the year.

GSIS president and general manager Winston F. Garcia released the information in light of reports that the agency had no more funds to sustain its loan windows.

Garcia said that last year, GSIS posted a net income of P127.98 million every working day. In 2002, GSIS also paid out P97.02 million in life and retirement claims daily.

GSIS earned a net income of P18.06 billion on its loans investments portfolio, allowing the firm to increase the funding of its pension, housing and other portfolios.

It also posted savings on its administrative expenses, having spend only 6.73 percent or P4.15 billion out of its authorized 12-percent or P7.89-billion adminsitrative expense loading.

This year, Garcia said that GSIS would be implementing new loan windows that would include a P30-billion retirement loan program and a P5-billion cash advance facility available through the GSIS e-card, which is expected to be issued within the year.

Garcia said the present slowdown in loans and claims processing was not due to lack of funds, but was actually a result of the backline activities of GSIS (hardware and software upgrade, posting of premium payments and loan installments) that, when completed, would improve its services by as much as 50 percent.

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SEC OKs new listing rules

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has approved the listing rules proposed by the Philippine Stock Exchange, including a provision allowing the exchange to exempt listed companies from the minimum public float requirement on a case-to-case basis.

The PSE earlier sought the commission's approval for a proposed rule that would extend to end-2006 from end-2004 the suspension of the rule requiring 10 to 30 percent of a listed company to be held by the public.

SEC market regulation department director Jose Aquino said the commission had decided not to grant the grace period but has allowed "a case-to-case" exemption from the rule after 2004.

"The grace period is unnecessary because there is still sufficient time for affected companies to comply with the minimum flotation limit considering the more than one year and a half-year period before the Dec. 2004 deadline," Aquino said.

Also approved by the commission was a rule to let the exchange consider a listed company for delisting if the company's stockholders' equity enters negative territory.

The corporate watchdog also did not object to the PSE's proposal to allow a listed company to undertake a new rights offering even though there were still unpaid subscription from a previous rights offering. However, the amount of unpaid subscription must not be more than 10 percent of the total shares previous offered.

The SEC also agreed to the PSE rule allowing for the listing of partially paid shares arising from a rights offering as long as the initial partial payment conforms with the requirements of the corporation code.

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False issues vs Bt corn

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

AS a one-time corn farmer who lost money to corn borers and other insect pests, I wish to answer the ten arguments against Bt corn listed in the PDI editorial of last May 20.

First. The pollen of Bt corn does not carry a "poison gene." The gene is from *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a naturally occurring soil-borne bacterium that produces a pre-toxin. This pre-toxin is activated by the alkaline condition of the gut of the corn borer to produce a toxin fatal to the corn borer, but only to the corn borer. The pre-toxin is not activated in the human stomach which is acidic. Planting earlier or later than the Bt corn farmer easily prevents cross-pollination. Even if cross-pollination occurs, the harvest can be sold to feed millers.

Second. A paper prepared by Dr. C. S. Prakash, Tuskagee University, and signed by 3,200 scientists worldwide, including 20 Nobel Laureates, supports the use of recombinant DNA as a potent tool for the achievement of a productive and sustainable agricultural system. Over 300 million North Americans have been eating Bt corn for years. No adverse health consequence has ever been reported.

Third. Bt corn is Monsanto's intellectual property, which is rightfully protected by a patent. Is there a corn farmer who can produce Bt corn? Besides, why should he do so, when Monsanto guarantees to buy all his Bt corn harvest at a price profitable to him?

Fourth. The decision to commercialize Bt corn was not rushed. Five years of research in the laboratory and the field back up the decision. The farmer's main problem is low productivity, not financing or infrastructure.

Fifth. Why should the farmer continue to use the old and ineffective defenses when there is now a much better and more effective defense in Bt corn?

Sixth. Refugia are an essential component of sustainable agriculture. How can refugia be bad for Bt corn but good for sustainable agriculture?

Seventh. Development of resistance is almost a certainty. When that happens, science will surely come up with a solution.

Eighth. Finally, there is a grudging acceptance of the value of Bt corn, that it will protect the yield. Theoretical yield is not as important to the farmer as actual yield. Bt corn directly influences the actual yield, which the farmer will actually harvest and actually sell for real income.

Ninth. Bt corn is an effective defense against the corn borer, the farmer's worst enemy. The other minor pests can be controlled conventionally.

Tenth. Of course, Bt corn is more expensive. But the farmer saves on pesticides, labor, and equipment. The bottom line is: the farmer makes more money by spending more on Bt corn seeds.

Next July, the European Community will lift its moratorium against Bt corn. Where does this place our local protesters?

There is no connection between Bt corn and antibiotic resistance. Dr. Maramba and her friends simply do not understand what Bt corn is all about.

That GMOs will reproduce, mutate and move within the environment belongs to the cheap sci-fi movies of the 1950s. Corn cannot grow without human help, because corn has no dormancy period. This means corn needs the hand of man to put the seed in contact with the ground. Otherwise, the seed dies.

Here are the areas, in million acres, planted to biotech crops: US, 96.3; Argentina 33.3; Canada, 8.6; China, 5.2. Other countries that grow biotech crops are South Africa, India, Spain, Mexico, Indonesia, Honduras, Australia, Romania, Uruguay, Bulgaria, Colombia, and Germany. There has been no damage to the environment.

The Philippines had better join the parade before it is too late for our poor corn farmers.

DOE move to seek new IPP deals opposed

By Michelle V. Remo

A GROUP of electric cooperatives is questioning the move of the Department of Energy to seek more independent power producers to service the country, while the results of the review of ongoing IPP contracts have yet to be disclosed.

According to Luis Corral, secretary general of the Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. should not be signing agreements with another set of IPPs until the review of the current contracts, which are perceived to be "onerous," are submitted to Congress and revealed to the country's electric cooperatives.

"We are concerned that some IPPs in Mindanao are not even producing a single kilowatt of power, and yet Mr. Perez is warning us about new brownouts and asking that new IPPs be allowed to come in. Before new IPPs are allowed to come in, the DOE should first disclose the results of the review of the IPP contracts," said Corral.

Corral also said the DOE and Private Sector Asset and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) had not done their responsibility of checking the contracts signed by the government and the IPPs which could have shown whether the IPPs were overpricing their supply.

"They should have renegotiated these contracts. One very large power producer in Central Luzon was reported to be double-selling its power, meaning it was charging cost as part of the purchased power adjustment (PPA) and at the same time, passing it on to another consumer, a large industrial plant in Pampanga," he said.

Corral said the government should be cautious in signing more agreements with IPPS.

He said the group is about to submit a recommendation to Congress pushing for the full disclosure of the results of the review of current IPP contracts.

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BIR mulls over IT outsourcing

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue is considering the possibility of outsourcing information technology services to enhance its data gathering skills and improve its service to taxpayers.

BIR Assistant Commissioner Vicky Santos said some of the software programs that the bureau could outsource are those that are related to its tax compliance verification or auditing functions and its online services.

Santos said the BIR could also outsource the data handling functions to pare down the high cost of maintaining computers that become obsolete after a few years.

"We are studying the benefits of outsourcing some of our IT functions. If the BIR would rent its computer hardware needs, then it could lessen expenditure for computers that usually only takes two to three years before they become obsolete. But everything is still in the process of study, nothing has been finalized yet," Santos said.

Santos said the computer program used for the BIR's electronic filing and payment system or EFPS service is currently provided by a unit of Ayala Corp.

She said the BIR does not have in-house computer systems that can carry all of its IT needs, such as for the full automation of its Relief (reconciliation of listings for enforcement) auditing system and other data entry programs.

Santos said the move to outsource some of its non-core functions would not only enhance its IT capabilities but could also minimize its operating cost.

FIRST THREE MONTHS

Napocor electricity sales up

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A SLIGHT increase in industrial activity has led to an 8.3-percent increase in the electricity sales of the state-run National Power Corp.

Napocor reported that its first-quarter power sales went up from 7,158 gigawatt-hours in the first three months of last year to 7,750 gWh in the same period this year.

Napocor attributed the slight increase to the higher demand for power by electric utilities led by the Manila Electric Co., as well as increased power use by its industrial customers.

Meralco is the biggest customer of the state-owned company and Napocor's data showed that the country's largest private electric utility used up 7.6 percent more electricity during the first three months of this year.

The distribution giant bought 3.699 gWh from January to March, up from 3,436 gWh in the first quarter of last year.

Napocor also chalked up a 10-percent increase in electricity sales to other utilities from 3,052 gWh to 3,362 gWh.

Sales to industrial customers, on the other hand, grew by about 3 percent from 656 gWh to 675 gWh. The uptrend was also evident in regional sales, Napocor said.

The company sold a total of 5,456 gWh in Luzon or 7.4 percent higher than last year. Luzon sales account for 70 percent of Napocor's total revenues.

The biggest uptick was seen in the Visayas, which registered an 18-percent growth to 881 gWh.

Napocor said this was due to higher demand by distribution utilities, particularly the Cebu-based Visayan Electric Co. which bought 195 gWh—about 20 percent more than what it bought in the first quarter of last year.

In Mindanao, sales registered at 1,412 or 7.9-percent higher than the previous record owing to higher consumption by the power-intensive cement and and steel industries.

Bulk electricity users in the Meralco franchise area, meanwhile, stand to benefit from the 72-centavo per kilowatt-hour discount scheme announced in April by Napocor and the National Transmission Corp.

Dubbed "Speed" or Special Program to Enhance Electricity Demand, the discount scheme is open to industrial and commercial power users operating within the Meralco franchise area.

This covers Metro Manila, Rizal, Bulacan, Cavite, Rizal and parts of Laguna, Pampanga and Quezon.

Napocor said the agreement pushed through after its board of directors approved a 50-centavo discount.

Transco's management, meanwhile, gave the go-ahead for its 10-centavo share in the discount.

Meralco said it's counterpart discount was pegged at 12 centavos per kWh.

AMA to invest ₱50M

By Abigail L. Ho

AMA Plans Inc., the pre-need arm of the AMA Group of Companies, will be investing P50 million this year to expand its branch network and launch a new educational plan.

AMA Plans chief operating officer Edward George de Vera said the fresh investments would bolster its capability to compete in the pre-need market.

"To respond to the growing demand for pre-need plans and to ensure a high level of customer satisfaction, we are focusing on our nationwide expansion and increasing our cash base," he said.

"This is also in line with the plans of the company to introduce innovative pre-need products, he added."

AMA Plans has put up 25 branches all over the Philippines, with a network of more than 7,000 sales consultants.

The Securities and Exchange Commission authorized AMA Plans to sell pre-need plans on Oct. 14, 1997, but it only started operations in 1998.

It had an authorized capitalization of P50 million, all of which had been subscribed and paid up.

The SEC initially gave it a license to sell P100 million worth of pension plan programs, but with recent developments, the pre-need firm had sold more than P300 Million worth of plans to more than 8,000 planholders.

Since its inception, AMA Plans had been posting an annual growth rate of 70 percent, faster than the industry growth rate of 20 percent annually.

De Vera said the company's good annual growth figures could be attributed to the quality of its product offering, efficient after-sales customer service as well as its affiliation with the AMA Educational System.

Meantime, AMA Education Corp. and AMA Computer University Inc. are expected to float P1.5 billion worth of information technology bonds in the next few weeks

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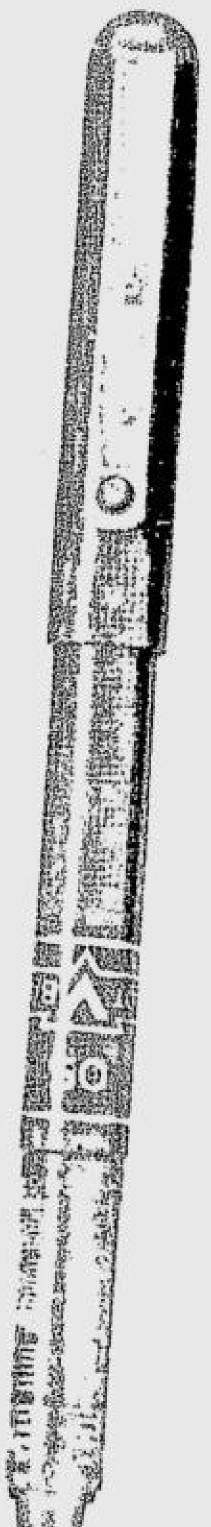

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URC pushes expansion overseas

By Elena R. Torrijos

PUBLICLY listed snacks and candy maker Universal Robina Corp. of the Gokongwei family aims to build its overseas branded consumer business to $200 million in annual revenue in five years as it continues to expand its operations in Asia.

"We will carry on the expansion of our branded consumer food products through additional manufacturing facilities and joint venture (agreements)," URC president Lance Gokongwei said.

Gokongwei disclosed that the company should begin trading operations in Vietnam before the end of the year and start planning in November for the establishment of a new manufacturing plant in that country.

"We want it (overseas business) to be as big as our domestic business. Basically, we need to keep growing by 20 percent," Gokongwei said.

The Vietnam plant was seen to cost $6 million to $8 million and produce one or two of URC's basic product lines of chocolates, candy, biscuits and snacks.

Gokongwei projected that revenue from overseas business should grow to P4.1 billion to P4.3 billion this fiscal year from P3.3 billion last year, principally from growth in the company's operations in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Gokongwei also projected that URC would post a 20-percent growth in profit this year over last year.

He said growth would be driven by its packaging business, which would see an almost doubling in capacity, as well as expected middle-digit volume growth in branded foods.

Last Thursday, URC approved a 30-centavo cash dividend for shareholders as of June 20 and payable on July 14.

Meanwhile, Gokongwei also disclosed that URC planned to bring down its capital expenditures to P1.5 billion in its fiscal year ending September 2004 from the P2.4 billion budgeted for its 2003 fiscal year.

The P1.5 billion would be mainly for the establishment of a manufacturing plant in Vietnam and expansion of domestic capacity.

Gokongwei said that the P1.5 billion could also include capex that would be pushed back from this year's P2.4-billion allocation.

Investor . . .

From page B1

SARS to their businesses," Buenaventura said.

Furthermore, the improved business sentiment was not seen to immediately translate to higher job opportunities for Filipinos, as the employment outlook index for the same period weakened to -6.3 percent from -4.6 percent in the previous quarter.

Buenaventura said this indicated that majority of the respondent firms had no plans to hire additional staff during the period.

"This confirms that excess capacity is still present in the economy," he said.

Only 22.6 percent of the respondents indicated plans to expand their businesses in the third quarter, lower than the 24.3 percent in the previous quarter.

Majority of the respondents nevertheless projected higher volume of business activity in the third quarter, as the index rose to 31 percent from 28.8 percent in the previous quarter.

The respondent firms also expected better opportunities to secure foreign loans in the third quarter, as the credit access index improved to -12.5 percent from -17.9 percent in the second quarter.

"Although still negative, this is the highest value reached by the index in the last nine quarters," Buenaventura noted.

Another favorable indicator was the improvement in the financial conditions index to -34.8 percent from -46.3 percent.

Despite the generally positive business confidence, the survey cited a number of factors which could pose downside risks to production and business activity—stiff competition, low demand, unclear economic laws, high interest rates and financial problems.

Survey respondents also continued to anticipate higher peso borrowings in the second quarter but expect a lower inflation rate and a stronger peso.

BSP . . .

From page B2

and securities of the government and the BSP itself would hit $8.04 billion over the next 12 months up to March 2004, accounting for half of the $16-billion GIR level as of end-April.

On top of these, the Philippines has $245 million in forward and futures contracts maturing by the first quarter of 2004.

Of the total debts maturing until March next year, $6.14 billion represented principal payments while the rest would be for interest.

Aside from the expected outflow from debt repayments, the BOP is also seen affected by weaker trade and investment inflows.

For the full year, the current account—a main BOP component—is expected to yield a surplus of $2.4 billion or much smaller than the $4 billion in 2002 as import spending was expected to outpace export earnings.

For the full year, the BSP expects to end up with a GIR level of $14-$15 billion, equivalent to a four-month import cover.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 23, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4	4	4	4	16,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	15	15.25	15	15.25	156,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	34	34.5	33.5	33.5	331,700
China Banking Corp.	690	690	690	690	100
Citystate Savings Bank	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	23.75	23.75	23.5	23.75	47,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26	25	25.5	101,700
Prudential Bank	225	225	225	225	50
Philippine National Bank	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	7,100
Security Bank Corp.	10	10	10	10	20,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	4,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	200	200	200	200	400
Manulife Financial Corp.	1400	1430	1400	1430	350
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1050	1050	1050	1050	1,250
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.73	0.73	3,980,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	560	575	560	570	78,600
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.04	0.041	0.04	0.04	14,900,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	1,160,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	330,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	425	427.5	422.5	422.5	101,170
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	7,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	33,000
Manila Electric Co. B	9.7	9.7	9.6	9.7	104,000
Petron Corp.	2.08	2.08	2.02	2.06	12,497,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	100,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.46	2.46	2.46	2.46	327,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	30,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	18,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.47	650,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	4.75	4.75	4.7	4.7	20,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	40,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	14,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26	26	25.5	25.5	16,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	15.5	15.75	15.5	15.75	382,200
San Miguel Corp. A	54.5	55	54.5	55	61,000
San Miguel Corp. B	65	65	64	64.5	47,400
Universal Robina Corp.	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	156,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05	2,693,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	268,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	2,500,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.92	1.92	1.78	1.78	280,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	650,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	2,340,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.16	0.16	700,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.205	0.21	860,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.8	140,000
Ionics Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.61	0.61	170,000
J.G. Summit Holdings, Inc.	1.42	1.44	1.42	1.44	1,170,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	220,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	1,000,000
Music Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	170,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.55	0.55	60,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	90,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	20,000
Pryce Corp.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	500,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	500,000
Manila Jockey Club	8	8	8	8	20,000
Mondragon Intl Phils, Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	200,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.44	0.46	0.44	0.44	4,200,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	30,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.8	985,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	250,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.81	0.82	0.8	0.81	8,900,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	4.7	4.7	4.65	4.65	359,000
MINING					
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	3,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	500,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	5,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.14	0.145	0.13	0.13	120,000

CURRENCIES

May 23, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.854409	1.000000	52.862000
Japan	Yen	0.007292	0.008535	0.451200
United Kingdom	Pound	1.397215	1.635300	86.445200
Hongkong	Dollar	0.109557	0.128225	6.778200
Switzerland	Franc	0.660234	0.772738	40.848500
Canada	Dollar	0.621795	0.727749	38.470300
Singapore	Dollar	0.496000	0.580518	30.687300
Australia	Dollar	0.562185	0.657981	34.782200
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.266457	2.652661	140.225000
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.227837	0.266660	14.096200
Brunei	Dollar	0.494564	0.578838	30.598500
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000103	0.000120	0.006300
Thailand	Baht	0.020391	0.023866	1.261600
UAE	Dirham	0.232638	0.272279	14.393200
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.170400	61.869700
Argentina	Peso	0.299792	0.350877	18.548100
Brazil	Real	0.286522	0.335345	17.727000
Denmark	Kroner	0.134675	0.157624	8.332300
India	Rupee	0.018253	0.021363	1.129300
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.224874	0.263193	13.912900
Mexico	New Peso	0.083292	0.097485	5.153300
New Zealand	Dollar	0.497937	0.582785	30.807200
Norway	Kroner	0.127470	0.149191	7.886500
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014833	0.017361	0.917700
South Africa	Rand	0.109226	0.127838	6.757800
Korea	Won	0.000715	0.000837	0.044200
Sweden	Kroner	0.109204	0.127812	6.756400
Syria	Pound	0.020343	0.023810	1.258600
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024715	0.028927	1.529100
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000536	0.000627	0.033100

INTEREST RATES

May 23, 2003-MART1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 23-May-03 (%)	MART1 22-May-03 (%)
1 Month	7.3039	7.3039
3 Months	7.25	7.2596
6 Months	8.2771	8.3104
1 Year	8.5885	8.6096
2 Years	9.2962	9.3423
3 Years	10.2327	10.2981
4 Years	10.8769	10.9135
5 Years	11.3096	11.3462
7 Years	11.7269	11.7289
10 Years	11.8788	11.9019
20 Years	12.7577	12.7596
25 Years	13.2615	13.2635

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

Bearish sentiment seen

From page B1

back into consolidation.

"Barring any further negative developments in the economy, we should see a pickup of bargain-hunting as the market retests the 1080 to 1100 resistance range," BPI Securities said.

Philstocks.net noted that there seemed to be some optimism that an economic recovery was forming, but that confidence was dampened by terrorism concerns both here and abroad.

"Moreover, uncertainties in the near-term political picture continued to hound investors. There is still no clear presidential candidate stepping forward," it noted.

One top pick of analysts for the week though is telecommunications giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas noted that PLDT was very cheap as its share price was about 7 times earnings. However, he warned against property stocks.

ING Financial Markets Research maintained its buy rating on PLDT, which closed at P422.50 last Friday, substantially below the securities group's target price of P460.

PLDT reported a first-quarter net profit of P2.48 billion against a restated net profit of P1.57 billion or a 58 percent year-on-year increase. *Elena R. Torrijos*

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ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1.4M	-
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	-	600K
CANLUBANG GOLF CLUB	-	450K
EAGLE RIDGE "A"	-	245K
FOREST HILLS "A"	-	155K
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	-	210K
MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)	-	10.3M
MANILA GOLF CLUB (CORP.)	11M	-
MANILA POLO CLUB	-	2.250M
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	475K	450K
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	600K	-
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	-	175K
SHERWOOD HILLS "B"	140K	-
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "B"	please call	1.4M
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	-	700K
THE COUNTRY CLUB	2M	-
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Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,400,000
Baguio Country Club	620,000	750,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	70,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	Please Call	-
Camp John Hay	200,000	230,000
Canlubang	450,000	500,000
Canyonwoods	-	150,000
Capitol Hills	110,000	135,000
Cebu Country Club	Please Call	-
Celebrity Sports Club	170,000	180,000
Club Filipino	110,000	180,000
Evercrest "A"	-	80,000
Forest Hills "A"	160,000	185,000
Forest Hills "B"		190,000
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	230,000	300,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	12,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,100,000	10,600,000
Manila Polo	-	2,400,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	Please Call	550,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	650,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	600,000
Metropolitan Club "A"	90,000	135,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	150,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	120,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	260,000	300,000
Montemar (Individual)	35,000	-
Mt. Malarayat (Individual)	-	300,000
Mt. Malarayat (Corporate)	-	500,000
Puerto Azul	-	100,000
Quezon City Sports Club	165,000	200,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Royale Tagaytay "A"	-	Please Call
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	75,000
Sherwood Hills "B"	-	180,000
Sherwood Hills "C"	-	200,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,250,000	1,500,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,600,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	200,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	390,000	430,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	820,000
Tagaytay Midlands	660,000	720,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	130,000	165,000
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Alabang A/B	1 100/1 415	Fontana D	50	Riviera A/C	130/150
Camp John Hay Golf	220	Forest Hill A/B/C	[illegible]	Sherwood	50
Canlubang Golf	450	Manila Polo	Pls call	Subic Yacht Ind./Corp	170/240
Canyon Woods	150	Manila Southwoods A/B	470/580	The Country Club	2M
Wack Wack	6 450M	Celebrity	175	Mimosa	120/270
BUYING		Club Filipino	130	Mt. Malarayat "A"	270
Alabang A/B	1 150/1 250	Manila Golf (indv)	10.3M	Orchard "A"/B/C	Pls call
Baguio Country Club	600	Manila Polo	2.250M	Quezon City Sports	175
Camp John Hay Golf	220	Manila Southwoods "A"/B	470/580	Sherwood B	130
Canlubang Golf	450	[illegible]	Pls call	Spa & Lodge/Midlands	700/700
Canyon Woods	125	Metropolitan "A"	100	Wack Wack	6.2M

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ALABANG "B"	1.6M	S WOODS "B"	600K	CANLUBANG	450K
CALATAGAN "A"	80K	STA. ELENA "A"	1.5M	CC @ TAG	350K
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PROVISIONAL DUTY

Cement imports shrink

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

CEMENT imports have been totally wiped out by a provisional duty whose continued implementation has been questioned by the Philippine Cement Importers Association Inc. (PCIA).

PCIA convenor Napoleon Co reported that there had been no cement imports nearly midway through this year because of a provisional duty that made importation unattractive in the face of rock bottom prices prevailing in the market.

Co said cement imports had been on slide since last year when shipments of ordinary gray Portland cement shrunk to 4 percent of the market in the first half and further down to 1 percent in the second half.

The Department of Trade and Industry had imposed a P20.60-per bag provisional duty on cement beginning December 2001 when imports from Taiwan, Japan and Indonesia were on the verge of cornering a substantial share of the market.

The provisional duty's effective date has been extended indefinitely following Philcemcor's success in getting a writ of preliminary injunction on April 22 last year which stopped the DTI from enforcing a Tariff Commission ruling that there was no direct link between imports and the eroding profits of local manufacturers.

In a letter to the Supreme Court administrator, Co questioned the undue delay in resolving the case which has forced importers to pay the P20.60-per bag provisional duty beyond its original 200-day effective period.

Co noted that the ex-plant price of local cement makers had already dropped to P103.43 per 40-kilogram bag from P124.03 per bag when the duty was imposed in 2001.

The PCIA claimed it could compete with local cement and force cement prices to go lower once the provisional duty was lifted.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II has stood pat on the imposition of the provisional duty which he said had contributed to sharp decrease in cement prices even through the seasonal peak in demand.

RP growth seen slowing down

By Doris C. Dumlao

HONG KONG Shanghai Banking Corp. expects the country's economic growth to slow down to 3.3 percent this year from 4.6 percent in 2002 due to the combined impact of rising interest rates, slower exports and the SARS outbreak in the Asian region.

The SARS outbreak, alone, had prompted HSBC, in its country review for May, to chip off 0.2 percentage points from its earlier growth projection for the Philippines of 3.5 percent.

"The small impact reflects the fact that tourism is not a vital driver of the economy, with revenues accounting for 2.3 percent of GDP last year," HSBC said.

The bank also adjusted its yearend peso-dollar exchange rate projection to 55 to $1 from 56 to $1 to reflect the widening of real interest rate differential in favor of peso assets.

It noted that the benchmark 91-day Treasury bill rate, for instance, had risen to over 7 percent since April from a low of 4.999 percent a year ago.

"However, getting control of the deteriorating public finances is the real key to achieving long-term peso stability without having to maintain a high real estate environment," it said.

A better fiscal position, it said, would result in lower interest rates, higher capital investment and reduced peso volatility.

"So far, however, the government's track record on reining in the budget deficit has been disappointing," it said.

The bank also noted the "hefty" 6.2 percentage decline in the tax to GDP ratio to 12.4 percent in 2002 from the level in 1997.

It noted that for this year, interest payments were projected at 38 percent of total revenues, up from 16.5 percent in 1997 and similar to the level in 1990.

The bank aired concern that the situation could "get worse" this year.

RTC to hear case vs ex-Nextel exec

THE PASIG regional trial court will soon continue hearing a P5-million case filed by Nextel Communications Phil. Inc. against former president and chief executive Antonio Urera following the Supreme Court's denial of the petition by the defendant.

The trunk radio operator two years ago filed a case against Urera due to his alleged nonpayment of a P3.4-million company housing loan even after severance from the company.

Urera had allegedly borrowed P1 million from the company but was barely able to make any payments for this. From salary deductions prior to his separation from Nextel on April 18, 2001, he was able to pay back only P26,195.36 of that loan. The balance was never returned, Nextel said in a statement over the weekend.

In a complaint filed with the Pasig RTC, Nextel also accused Urera of reimbursing personal foreign travel expenses, even those incurred "by his son and other companions not officially connected with Nextel."

Nextel is seeking the reimbursement of the amount initially given to Urera and his travel companions, including interest and damages.

However, Urera, through lawyer Alan Paguia, filed a motion to dismiss the case. The Pasig RTC denied both the motion to dismiss as well as the motion for reconsideration on the court's denial of the earlier filed motion that Paguia filed on behalf of Urera.

The case was then elevated to the Court of Appeals, which likewise denied the defendant's appeal and upheld the Pasig RTC order. *Abigail L. Ho*

SEC replaces Uniwide group receiver

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has replaced the three-member receiver committee it appointed to oversee the rehabilitation of cash-strapped retail group Uniwide with a single lawyer following the Gow family's petition to dissolve the committee.

In an order dated May 12, the commission appointed Julio Elamparo as rehabilitation receiver of Uniwide, replacing the committee composed of Arthur Aguilar, Monico Jacob and Cornelio Peralta.

The Gow family, Uniwide's majority owners, had asked the SEC to appoint Jose Araullo of the Punongbayan & Araullo auditing firm as permanent rehabilitation receiver while the committee itself had recommended Aguilar.

Aguilar declined the post given the commission's decision to cut his compensation to P50,000 a month while Araullo withdrew from the selection process, SEC general counsel Vernette Umali-Paco explained. *Elena R. Torrijos*

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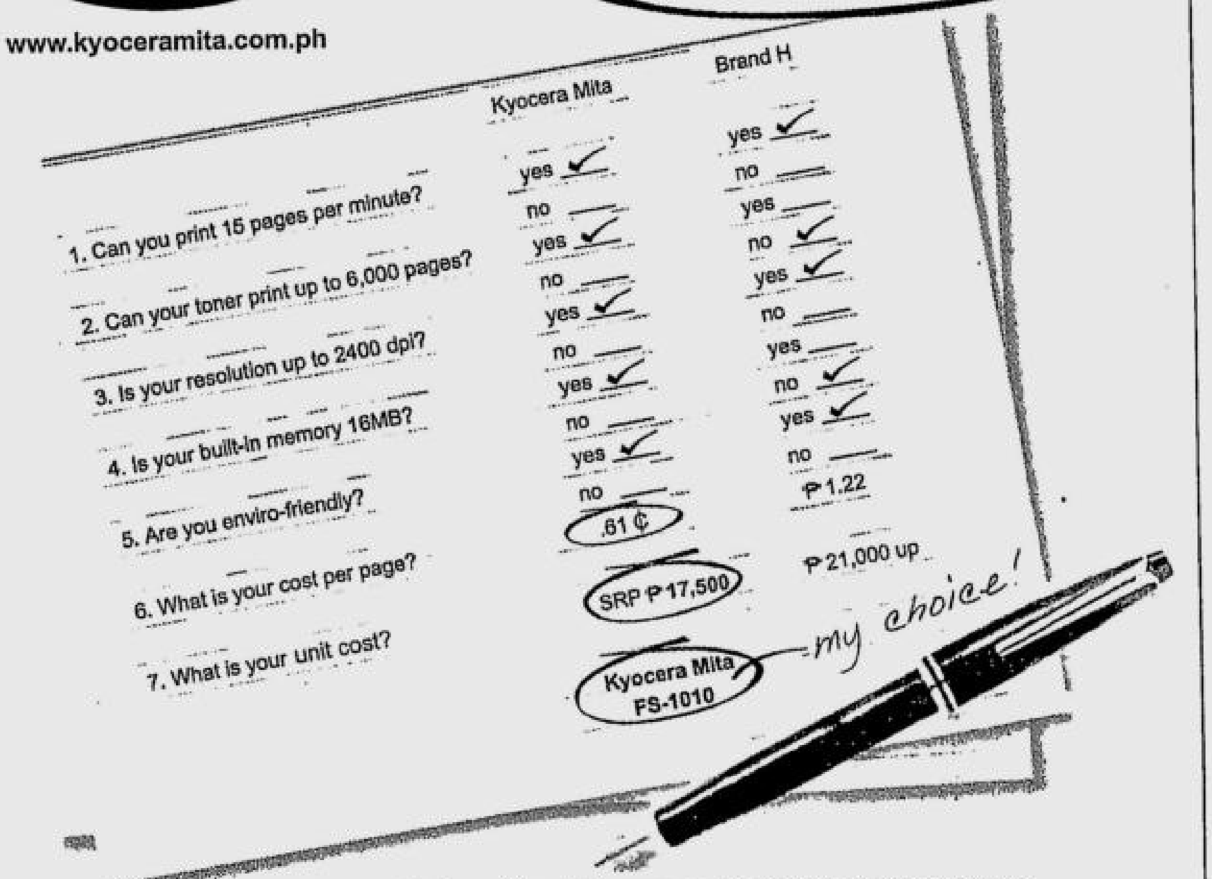

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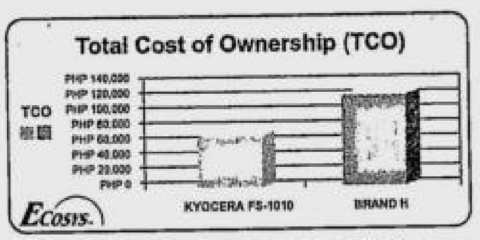

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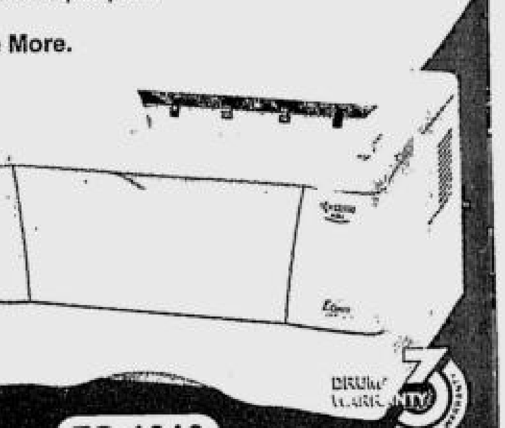

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Wall Street may extend rally

NEW YORK—Wall Street shares retreated over the past week, but analysts said the move may be a healthy consolidation that could allow the market to extend its rally that began in mid-March.

The Dow Jones industrial average dipped 0.89 percent to 8,601.38 in the week to Friday, and the broad-market Standard and Poor's 500 gave back 1.17 percent to 932.22.

The technology-heavy Nasdaq declined 1.85 percent to 1,510.09 as the market closed for the three-day Memorial Day weekend.

But because the losses were relatively modest after a 10-week rally that pushed the broad market up by nearly 20 percent, analysts said the decline was more likely a consolidation than a new downward trend.

"Momentum is on the upside for the market barring any major unforeseen development," said Peter Cardillo of Global Partners Securities.

Noting congressional approval of a $350-billion tax package, Cardillo said, "The package is here and that's good news for the market. I suspect the market will continue higher on perceptions that the economy will improve going forward."

But Richard Bernstein, chief US strategist at Merrill Lynch, said investors should remain defensive, warning of a possible "bubble" in the market not justified by improving earnings.

"We reaffirm our strong emphasis on higher-quality assets," he said in a research note. "We also wonder if it is time to welcome back Mr. Bubble."

He added, "A number of clouds are looming on the investment horizon. Earnings are not as strong as most people think they are, and our profit indicators suggest that second-half earnings growth might be considerably weaker than expected."

Alfred Goldman at AG Edwards said he believes Wall Street may be in a new bull market phase while averting the kind of stock bubble experienced in the 1990s. *AFP*

US tax cut to lift growth

WASHINGTON—The newly passed US tax cut plan may give a lift to the anemic economy, but a key point of contention among economists is whether the plan packs enough punch to justify the resulting rise in budgetary red ink.

Even those who welcome the package say it won't deliver the job gains sought by President George W. Bush right away.

The $350 billion 10-year tax cut is expected to add about a half-percentage point to US gross domestic product in the second half of this year, according to the estimates of several private economists.

It has been chopped to less than half the size the Bush administration originally proposed.

The package, headed for Bush's desk after passage by Congress on Friday, offers cuts in taxes on dividends and capital gains as well as breaks for households and businesses.

It also includes $20 billion in aid to cash-strapped states.

Even though the plan is much lower than Bush originally proposed, many political analysts saw it as a big victory for him. However, with the 2004 presidential campaign looming, Bush still must turn the economy to his advantage.

GDP has grown at a rate of just 1.5 percent over the past six months and only haltingly since the 2001 recession.

Some 2.7 million jobs have been lost from private-sector payrolls since Bush took office in January 2001, including more than half a million in February through April alone.

With the Federal Reserve running out of room for further cuts in short-term interest rates, some economists who might ordinarily be skeptics about using fiscal policy to spur short-term growth have been more open to the idea.

The central bank, which has already chopped rates to 1961 lows, has recently warned that the US economy faces a small but serious threat of deflation, or widespread price declines.

But Fed Chair Alan Greenspan, who says the Fed has ample tools apart from changing short-term rates to boost growth if needed, still believes fiscal policy is ill-suited to trying to set the near-term tempo of growth.

"Obviously, I've said in the past and my belief is that it is very difficult to fine fiscal policy for short-term purposes," Greenspan told Congress' joint economic committee earlier this week.

He has given momentum to lawmakers who wanted to shrink the tax package by warning of the need to curb growing deficits. *Reuters*

Listed firms in Japan see record profits

TOKYO—Japanese-listed companies expect to see a 15.7-percent rise in their combined recurring profit to a record high in the current year to March, a business daily said in a survey Saturday.

The Nihon Keizai Shimbun said its survey of 1,426 non-financial companies found they expect a combined recurring profit of 17.77 trillion yen ($152 billion).

Sales are forecast to edge up only one percent to 396.72 trillion yen due to a domestic economic slump.

But the companies expect to boost their profits by cutting jobs and raw materials costs, the newspaper said.

Net profit is forecast to surge 57.2 percent to 9.03 trillion yen after skyrocketing to 5.75 trillion yen in the previous year from a mere 67 billion yen in the year to March 2002, it said.

Companies in 28 of the 32 sectors project an improvement in earnings in the current year to March.

Electronics makers predicting their recurring profits will surge more than 40 percent, it said.

But the daily warned it is uncertain whether the forecasts will be realized due to negative factors.

These include deflation at home and abroad, the yen's appreciation and the effects of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome outbreak. *AFP*

HK starts rebuilding economy

HONG KONG—Hong Kong began the daunting task Saturday of rebuilding its shattered international image to lure back tourists and businesses following the lifting of an economically disastrous SARS travel warning.

Hong Kong was united in welcoming the move by the World Health Organization (WHO) Friday to lift its warning against non-essential travel to the city, saying the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome was being contained.

However, once the celebrations subsided, trade organizations, travel bodies and the government immediately began to put into gear plans to kickstart the former British colony's economic recovery.

Joseph Tung, director of the Travel Industry Council, said travel agents had already begun rebuilding their shattered businesses, which had reported up to 90 percent falls in bookings during the crisis.

"The removal of the WHO advisory will lead initially to a 20-percent rebound in tour groups, which had fallen to almost zero during the SARS crisis," he said.

Tourism industry executives have estimated the sector has lost billions of dollars in revenue since the WHO warning was imposed on April 2.

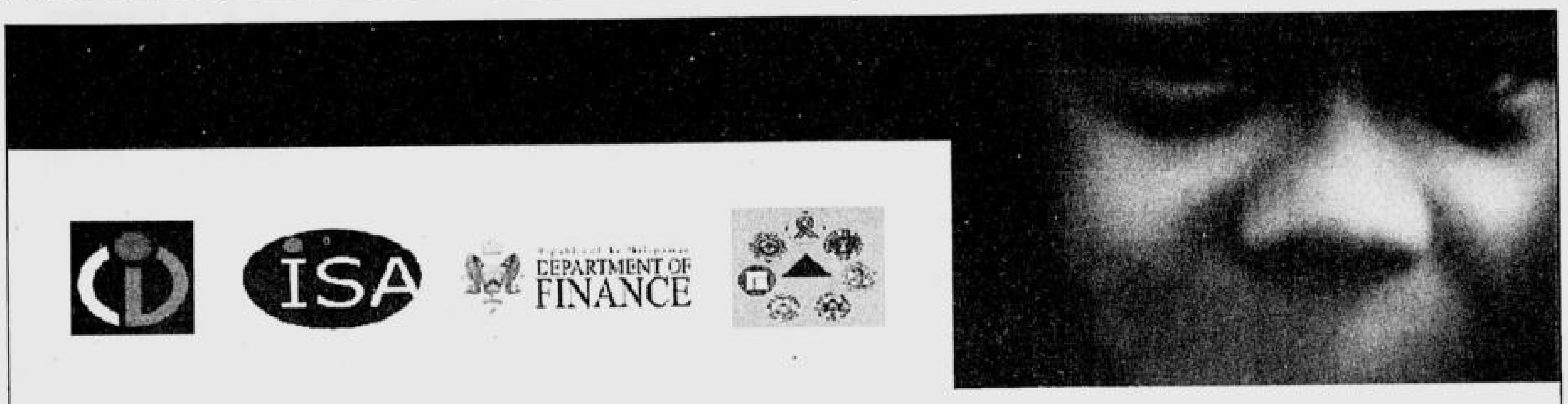
The World Travel and Tourism Council said SARS would cause some $8.8 billion in direct economic losses this year to Hong Kong and mainland China, the worst affected SARS regions.

Hong Kong has reported 260 deaths from 1,724 infections since March 12, but has seen a marked slowdown in new cases in recent weeks, prompting the WHO to lift its warning.

Travel and tourism have been the worst hit industries and the retail, restaurant and entertainment sectors have also been badly hit by the outbreak, leading unemployment to soar to a record 7.8 percent.

However, there have been recent signs that local people were starting to venture out again and pent up demand for travel is likely to provide a boost to the tourism sector.

The lifting of the advisory would also lead to a strong pick-up in business travel. *AFP*



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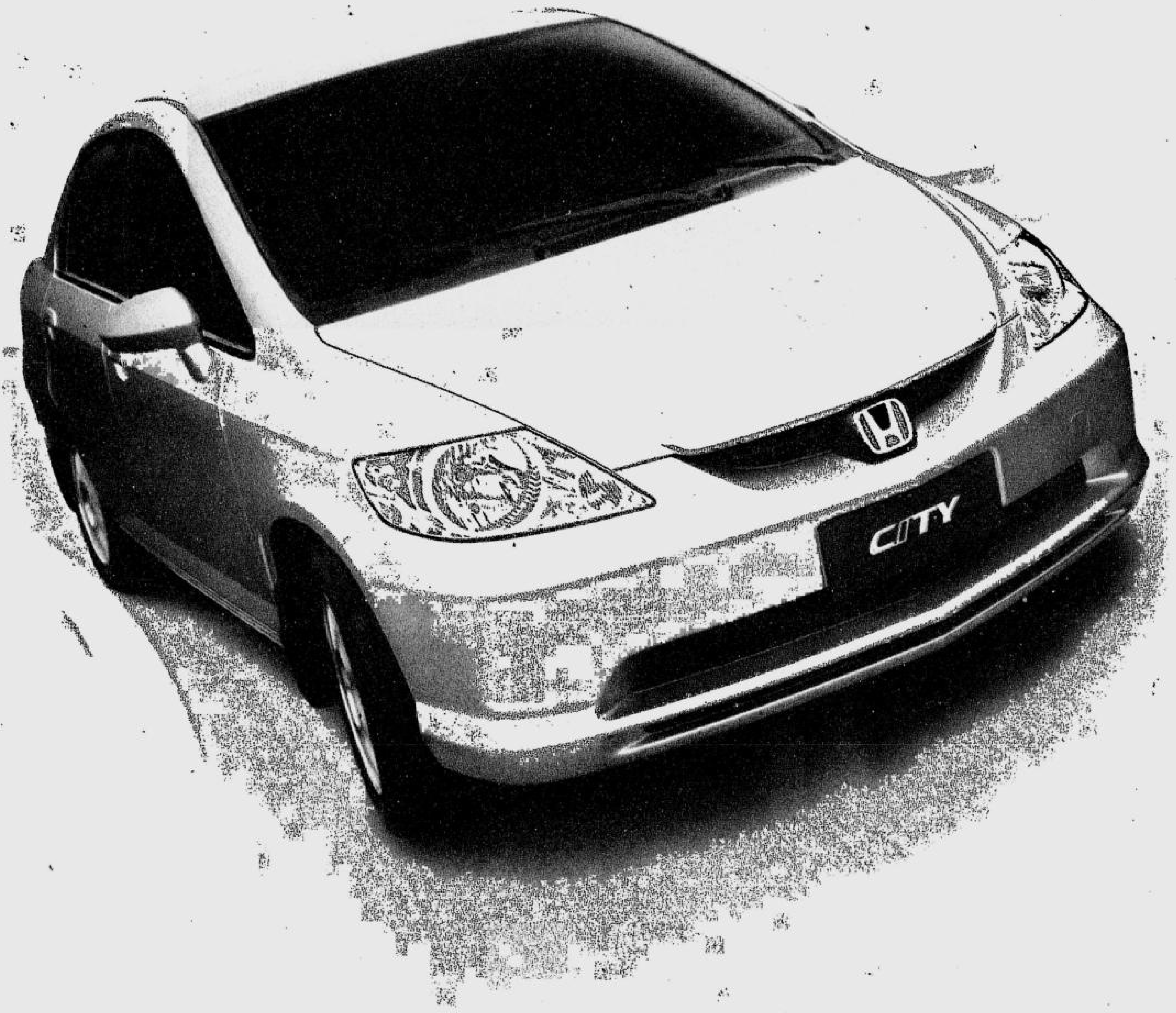

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

WG&A SuperFerry sponsors volunteers to Work Camp 2003

WG&A SuperFerry recently sponsored volunteers to a youth development project called Work Camp 2003. The 17 volunteers came from Asian Institute of Management (AIM), Ateneo de Manila, University of the Philippines (Diliman), and University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P). They went to Iloilo City on board Super Ferry 15 to join other volunteers from University of San Carlos (Cebu), University of the Philippines in the Visayas (Iloilo) and University of San Agustin (Iloilo) to work on the infrastructure projects at the Hibao-an Elementary School (HES), Mandurriao, Iloilo City being undertaken by the University Center Foundation Inc. The projects were undertaken April 6 to 16.

WG&A SuperFerry provided for free round-trip passage for the volunteers. This sponsorship is part of WG&A Super Ferry's thrust to support projects that contribute to community and youth development, its corporate social responsibility program.

The infrastructure project involved mainly repairing the ceiling and roof of one of the school canteens and repairing and refurbishing the comfort rooms. The volunteers were divided into three groups, each volunteer contributing eight hours of work per day. Some of the volunteers also held academic tutorials, a component of the Work Camp wherein the elementary students were given classes in Math and English. Two of the work campers completing their Master's Degree at AIM gave seminar-workshops to the schoolteachers, SK, and barangay officials of Hibao-an Norte and Sur April 8 and 9. Overall, these activities highlight one of the important aspects of the Work Camp, which is to give a first-hand opportunity for volunteers to carry out social service.

A total of 610 students and 17 teachers will benefit from the infrastructure projects conducted by the volunteers. The teachers were particularly grateful, for they considered this work camp as a blessing for their school. According to principal Rosario Villalon, "We really appreciate the participation of these young people in the work camp and the time they sacrificed to repair these buildings which have not been repaired for a long time."

The volunteers, on the other hand, are also very thankful to the teachers and parents for the continuing support they give to them.

For the volunteers, the Work Camp is not only an opportunity to contribute to community building, but it also helps them to avail themselves of the personal formation they themselves need. Volunteers were able to participate in talks on career planning, professionalism, leadership, and virtues.

"It's a volunteering activity with a learning component", says Dr. Nazareno Velasco, the Iloilo Work Camp vice director. Youth program experts call it service-learning, an activity that combines service objectives with learning objectives with the intent that the activity change both the recipient and the provider of the service. This is accomplished by combining service tasks with structured opportunities that link the tasks to self-reflection,

self-discovery, and the acquisition and comprehension of values, skills, and knowledge content. (cf. www.servicelearning.org).

UCF is a non-government organization which aims to help the poor and to form socially responsible leaders. The Work Camp is UCF's yearly project. For inquiries on UCF's youth oriented programs, call (02)924-2892 or 412-2900. Or e-mail ucf@skyinet.net.

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PILMAP PRESENTED TO AIR PHILIPPINES

PilMap Travel and Leisure magazine publisher Gabriel dela Cruz (2nd from left) recently presented a copy of the premiere edition of the magazine to Air Philippines' senior vice president for administration/marketing and sales Patria Chiong. Also present were PilMap editor-in-chief Vic Albornoz Lactaoen and promotions manager Jeffrey Tan. PilMap Travel and Leisure Magazine is a quality travel and lifestyle magazine for and about the Philippines. It is distributed free worldwide to major capitals in the world where there is a huge concentration of Filipinos and foreign travelers to the Philippines.

Beauty, skin care in May issue of HealthToday

LIVING in the city is tough on the skin. How can urban dwellers save their skin? Running a household, raising kids and building a career-how can busy Moms stay beautiful? Skin care isn't just for women. How can men care for their skin?

Get all the answers in this month's issue of HealthToday-plus get free pullout guides on caring for your newborn and developing creativity in your child. On the cover is international celebrity, host and model Vivien Tan who talks about her new mission in life.

HealthToday is a consumer health magazine published monthly in the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand.

HealthToday is available in all bookstores, newsstands, and retail outlets nationwide. For subscription inquiries, call 886-0333 local 112, or e-mail enquiry@medimedia.com.ph.

HEROES IN THEIR OWN RIGHT

25 aspiring linemen recently graduated from a one-year special lineman's scholarship program sponsored by Manila Electric Company as part of the commemoration of its centennial. The new graduates were challenged to make a difference in society with the small things they do everyday by the commencement speaker Leonisa de la Llana, Meralco vice president for human resources and corporate services. During the graduation ceremonies, one of the scholars is shown receiving his certificate from De la Llana and representatives of Marikina Institute of Science and Technology, where the scholars completed their program.

Frontier bullish in pickup market

NISSAN FRONTIER drove its way to the peak of pickup sales once again in the double cab compact pickup segment for the month of April.

Latest figures revealed that for the 4X2 category alone, Frontier posted 139 units sold for the month and 70 units in the 4X4, making it the no.1 selling pickup for both categories.

For this sales feat, Universal Motors Corp., assembler and distributor of Nissan light commercial and recreational vehicles, fastened its no.1 belt anew for owning 209 units or 37.3 percent of the overall market share of the combined 4x2/4X4 double cab compact pickup segment based on a recent industry sales report of the Truck Manufacturers Association of the Philippines (TMA).

Nissan Frontier has remained on the frontline of the double cab compact pickup sales race, refusing to shift gears and speeding all the more to the top spot since January. Of the 2088 pickups reportedly sold by all major automotive players, 778 of them were sales closed by UMC. With its Nissan Frontier carrying the winning flag , UMC outpaces its competitors for its 37.3-percent stake of the overall market share in the first four months of 2003.

This latest TMA report only proves that Nissan Frontier remains to be the best in the eyes of its long-time clients, which can be attributed to its topnotch performance, dependability and durability which even gets better through the years.

SENATE APPROVES BOMBO RADYO FRANCHISE

Bombo Radyo Philippines has gotten the unanimous nod of the Senate during the third and final reading May 12 of three House Bills, namely House Bills 4259, 4380, and 4885. The three Bills renewed for another 25 years the franchise of Consolidated Broadcasting System, Inc. (CBS), People's Broadcasting Service Inc. (PBS), and Newsounds Broadcasting Network (NBN), all under the umbrella of Bombo Radyo Holdings Inc. The final reading was attended by network president and CEO Rogelio M. Florete, network comptroller Alma A. Jadie, and Jenil Demorito, OIC-COO AM division. The proceeding was presided by Senate President Franklin Drilon. Shown in huddle with regulators during a break from floor deliberations is Florete discussing salient points during the 2nd Reading of its franchise renewal May 8. From left is Sen. John Osmeña, Anthony Samonte, Committee Secretary on Public Hearing, Florete, and Senate President Franklin Drilon. Seated, with back to the camera is Sen. Joker Arroyo, Chairman, Blue Ribbon and Public Services Committee.

PR EXEC RECEIVES EXCELLENCE AWARD

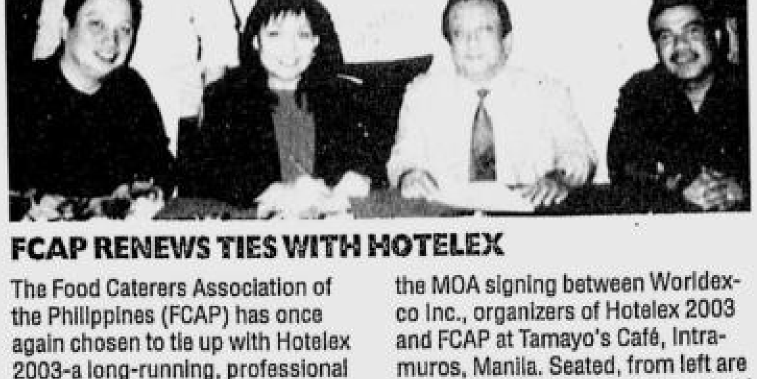
The Asia Pacific Excellence Awards (Apea) recently honored outstanding individuals with significant achievements in business, public service, education, sports, arts and culture and other professional fields. Among the awardees in the Golden Scroll category for business and industry is PR executive Nancy L. Harel, president and CEO of Nancy Harel and Associates Inc (NHAI). A prominent figure in the world of advertising and PR, Harel's notable career spans almost three decades. Harel helped build formidable brands such as Eight O'Clock, Hapee Toothpaste, and New Zealand Milk products like Anlene and Anchor. Shown during the awarding ceremonies are Jonathan Navea, Apea president/project chair, Joseph Daraman of Laguna, Apca screening committee co-chair, Harel, and Princess Zorayde Alonto, Apea nomination committee co-chair.

9th PHICS annual confab

THE PHILIPPINE Hospital Infection Control Society (PHICS) Inc. will be holding its 9th Annual Convention on May 29 and 30 at the Occupational Safety and Health Center, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. The theme for this year's convention is "New Horizons in Infection Control: Current Trends, Future Directions". The society has invited experts in the field of Infectious Diseases and Infection Control to speak on various topics addressing issues in the control of infection in the hospital setting, including the prevention and control of infection in immunocompromised patients, quality improvement in antibiotic prescription, and the influence of environmental control in containing the spread of infection. Interested parties can call 526-17-05 or 521-84-50 loc 3250, or write to the secretariat care of the Infection Control Committee Office, 2nd floor ER Complex, Philippine General Hospital, Taft Avenue, Manila.

GAWAD QUEDANCOR FOR PLANTERSBANK

Planters Development Bank was recently awarded the Gawad Quedancor as the top lending bank for 2002 in recognition of its exemplary performance in implementing various programs of the Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor). Receiving the award from Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. (right) and Quedancor president Nelson Buenaflor (left) is Plantersbank first vice president Ana T. Kwan. Plantersabnk, the country's largest private development bank, is recognized as the leading institution for small and medium entrepreneurs.



FCAP RENEWS TIES WITH HOTELEX

The Food Caterers Association of the Philippines (FCAP) has once again chosen to tie up with Hotelex 2003-a long-running, professional trade exhibit on equipment, supplies, services and food and beverage products for the hotel, restaurant, catering and baking industries. Hotelex will be held from May 29 to 31 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila. For inquiries, call Worldexco at 891-8638 or 834-7408. Shown is the MOA signing between Worldexco Inc., organizers of Hotelex 2003 and FCAP at Tamayo's Café, Intramuros, Manila. Seated, from left are Danny Jacinto, FCAP founding chair, Lynn Z. Romero, Worldexco president, Salvador Abesamis, FCAP president, and Steve Tamayo, FCAP vice chair. Standing, from left, are Katrina Pineda, Worldexco sales manager and Herman Paras, FCAP assistant treasurer..

Clips

1st national rice summit

FINAL preparations are underway for the holding of the first National Rice Summit from May 28 to 30 at the Philippine Social Science Center Auditorium, PSSC Building, Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. The National Rice Summit aims to tackle the following objectives: 1. Review major issues, problems and obstacles confronting the Philippine ride industry; 2. Trace the roots of the country's failure to achieve rice self-sufficiency despite various productivity enhancement programs implemented by the government; 3. Discuss the growth and development prospects of the Philippine rice industry, and; 4. Determine and analyze the effects of trade liberalization on the rice industry. For inquiries, interested participants can call the National Rice Summit Secretariat, care of the Philippine Peasant Institute, at 929-6211 or 924-3767. E-mail philpeasant@pacific.net.ph.

PSLIS training-workshop

THE PHILIPPINE Society of Librarians and Information Specialists (PSLIS), in cooperation with DesignBytes, will hold a 3-day training-workshop on "Libraries in Rapid Transition: Technical Skills for E-Learning Environment" at Blue Palm Resort, Bagong Kalye, Barangay Masili, Pansol, Laguna May 28 and 29. Registration fee is P3,800. For reservations and particulars call Lyn Mimay (724-1994), Lily Echiverri (929-2180 or 920-5301 loc. 5361), Joven Mangubat (527-3503), Medy (897-8808 loc. 329), or Beth Nablo (932-1295).

PMA conference opens

THE 34TH National Marketing Conference on "Creative Marketing: New Markets, New Rules, New Strategies" mounted by the Philippine Marketing Association (PMA) opens May 28 at the Grand Ballroom of the Westin Philippine Plaza. This two-day session will convene experts in the field of marketing to impart new concepts, methods and styles zeroing in on the critical role that creative marketing plays in our present society where change is not only inevitable but rapidly and constantly happening. A gathering of the big names in marketing from the public and private sectors, the NMC honors marketing success stories and aims to inspire marketers to trust their instincts and be creative. For inquiries, call the PMA secretariat at 892-3144/813-0466/893-7127/893-6459 or fax 892-3261. E-mail pma@philonline.com.

ProductFILES

Cool snack duo

IN THE spirit of summer fun, Frito Lay presents Cool Snack Duo, an exciting promo where you can enjoy crunchy treats and refreshing Pepsi Twist at a very friendly price. Purchase one big bag of any of your favorite Frito Lay chips-Doritos, Lays or Ruffles-and get a 1.5-liter Pepsi Twist by adding P7 only. With this special tie-up you can save up to P21. You can choose from Frito Lay's flavorful variants such as Doritos Nacho, Lays Regular and Lays Sour Cream & Onion, as well as Ruffles Regular and Ruffles Cheddar Sour Cream. Indeed, summer gimmicks are extra cool and fun with Frito Lay and Pepsi Twist, your all-time favorite snack and thirst-quenching drink. Hurry, the Cool Snack Duo promo is available only until supplies last so grab them at leading supermarkets. Frito Lay chips are exclusively distributed by Benby Enterprises Inc.

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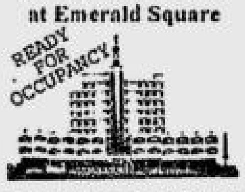

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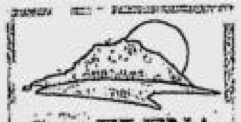

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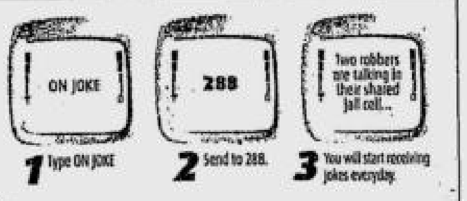
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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the heirs of LIDWINA LOS BA—OS ABES had executed a Deed of Extrajudicial Settlement of estate with waiver of rights on April 10, 2003 and acknowledged the same before Notary Public Dante S. David for and in the City of Quezon, Philippines and bearing Doc. No. 139; Page No. 28; Book No. 1; Series of 2003 of his Notarial Register
(PDI-May 26, June 2 & 9, 2003)

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

ANTONIO "DICK" CABUSAO

The public is hereby notified that **MR. ANTONIO "DICK" CABUSAO,** whose photograph appears hereto, has ceased to be connected **with A.V. Ocampo Insurance Associates effective April 30, 2003.**

Any transaction entered into with **Mr. Cabusao** after said date shall not be honored by the company.

A.V. OCAMPO INSURANCE ASSOCIATES, INC.
114 Aguirre St., Legaspi Village, Makati City
Tel. No.: 892-5546

(PDI–May 26, 2003)

Department of Labor and Employment
SM SUPERMALLS

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's
SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM at the
KABUHAYAN Action Center
SM Megamall Bldg. A
Mandaluyong City
April 10-June 10, 2003
4/F Bridgeway

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

IMITATION KOHLER® ENGINE PARTS

KOHLER CO. owns hundred of registered trademarks worldwide as well as registrations in Philippines for KOHLER® covering a variety of products, including engines, electric generating plants and parts and accessories for these products.

It has recently come to Kohler Co.'s attention that certain parties are distributing fake or counterfeit "KOHLER" branded products in Philippines. These fake or counterfeit "KOHLER" branded products are of much lower quality than Kohler Co.'s genuine KOHLER® branded products.

Kohler Co. is committed to prohibiting such unauthorized activities in order to protect its customers and will cooperate with assisting aggrieved parties in the prosecution of distributors, importers and manufacturers of fake or counterfeit "KOHLER" branded products in Philippines.

WARNING is hereby given that any person or entity using the KOHLER® mark without the consent of Kohler Co. shall be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. The public is urged to provide information that would lead to the prosecution of infringers to:

Kohler Power Systems
Philippine Representative Office
88 Corporate Center
Room 2108 - 141 Valero corner Sedeño Streets
Salcedo Village, Makati City
Manila, Philippines 1227
Phone: 632-888 5481
Fax: 632-884 1429
Contact: Chito Borja, Area Manager

(PDI–May 26, 2003)

PSALM Power Sector Assets & Liabilities Management Corporation

POWER SECTOR ASSETS AND LIABILITIES MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), PSALM with office address at 2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City invites duly licensed Hardware and Software Suppliers, Certified CISCO Systems Integrator and 1st tiered and Internet Service Providers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements:

I. **PROJECT NAME : PROCUREMENT OF HARDWARE AND CONNECTIVITY FOR PSALM'S ELECTRICITY TRADING, SETTLEMENTS/TREASURY AND ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS**

1. SCHEDULE I : Desktop and Notebook Computers, Printers & Fingerprint ID System
2. SCHEDULE II : Clustered Servers, UPS, Backup System and Anti-virus Software
3. SCHEDULE III : Cisco Routers, Switches and Structured Cabling Works
4. SCHEDULE IV : Leased Line Connections by Internet Service Provider

II. **BIDDING SCHEDULE : SINGLE STAGE BIDDING PROCESS**

1. ISSUANCE OF BID DOCUMENTS : May 19- June 3, 2003
2. PRE-BID CONFERENCE : May 28, 2003/ PSALM Conference Room 2:00 PM
3. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS : June 10, 2003
4. ELECTRONIC BIDDING : To be announced

NOTE : Interested Bidders may request clarifications in writing if unable to attend the pre-bid conference.

III. The complete package of Tender Documents shall be issued to duly licensed Suppliers/Firms who submitted a Letter of Intent to participate in the bidding within seven (7) working days after the last day of advertisement in newspapers and/or posting on DBM/DOE/PSALM Websites of this invitation.

All interested bidders may secure the bidding documents from the PSALM BAC Secretariat located at the 2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City starting May 19, 2003 after payment of a non-refundable amount of **Five Thousand Pesos (P 5,000.00)**. Inquiries and/or clarifications to the eligibility and bidding requirements may be addressed to the Chairman, BAC at Tel. No. 817-00-37.

IV. **PSALM** reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following:

a. liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids;
b. obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

V. **The approved budget for the contracts are as follows:**

1. SCHEDULE I : Eight Million Seven Hundred Ninety Thousand Pesos (P8,790,000)
2. SCHEDULE II : Thirty One Million Three Hundred Fifty Thousand (P 31,350,000)
3. SCHEDULE III : Twenty Three Million Three Hundred Eighty Six Thousand (P 23,386,000)
4. SCHEDULE IV : Six Million Seven Hundred Fifty Six Thousand (P 6,756,000)

(SGD.) HELEN E.V. SAN PEDRO
Chairperson, BAC

(PDI – May 19 & 26, 2003)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Regional Office XIV
Cotabato City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PROCUREMENT OF SECURITY SERVICES FOR NFA REGION XIV

The National Food Authority (NFA) invites all interested **Private Security Agencies (PSA's)** to participate in the bidding for security services in NFA Region XIV.

Interested bidders may secure the Eligibility Requirements from the Secretariat, Bids and Awards Committee for Security Services (BAC-SS), after payment of non-transferable, non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (Php5,000.00) from **June 16-30, 2003.** The Application for eligibility and required documents thereof, duly accomplished in five (5) copies shall be submitted from **July 01-18, 2003.**

All Qualified Applicants shall be invited to participate in the Pre-Bidding Conference and Bidding Proper to be held on **July 31, 2003** and **September 01, 2003,** respectively, at the NFA Regional Office XIV. Conference Room, ARMM Complex, Cotabato City.

For any inquiry, please call telephone number **(064) 421-2407** and **Telefax (064) 421-2128.**

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality, technicality or defect therein and may accept the bid which is deemed most advantageous to the Government. The NFA neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the NFA guarantees that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) DIMNATANG R. UMPA
Regional Director
NFA – RO – XIV

(PDI–May 12, 19 & 26, 2003)

DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT
J.P. Laurel Avenue, Bajada, Davao City
Tel. No. 221-9400 Fax No. 224-5392

INVITATION TO BID

The **DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT (DCWD)** invites interested bidders for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY** of One (1) unit **Brand New Backhoe Loader** with the following technical data:

One (1) unit Brand New Backhoe Loader, Wheel Type, made in USA, with the following specifications:

a. 73-78 Net HP (min.) natural aspirated diesel engine with automatic fanbelt tensioner, over center backhoe design.
b. 4 wheel drive-Push Button activation, hydrostatic steering
c. General Purpose 82 inches wide loader bucket, .8 to 1.0 cu.m. capacity
d. 24" wide backhoe bucket complete with teeth .18 cu.m. capacity (minimum)
e. Digging depth-14 Ft. minimum
f. Cast ductile iron backhoe center boom & swing tower with 5 years warranty
g. ROPS/FOPS canopy with front windshield with wiper and washer
h. Power shuttle synchromesh transmission with torque converter
i. With spare backhoe bucket, width 12 inches with teeth – .10 cu.m. capacity
j. With auxiliary Hydraulics-Provision-Loader side (Multi-purpose attachment)
k. With Manufacturers standard equipment and accessories & tools
l. With manual parts catalog

NOTE:

- For Philippine Exclusive Distributors, please attach certificate of exclusive distributorship
- Spare parts and after-sales services must be available locally
- Delivery must be within 30 days from receipt of P.O.
- Quoted Price must be in Philippine Peso

Quoted Price must be "DELIVERED DCWD COMPOUND"

Bids shall be addressed to the Chairman, Bid & Canvass Committee and must be received at the DWCD not later than **June 5 @ 3:00 p.m.** at which time and place said bids will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

Each bid must be accompanied with a 2.5% bidders bond, either in form of cash or Cashiers/Managers check from an accepted bank based in Davao City.

The DCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality in such bids and to accept such bids most advantageous to the District.

(Sgd.) ALFONSO E. LAID
Asst. Gen. Manager for Administration
Chairman, Bids & Canvass Committee

(PDI–May 19 & 26, 2003)

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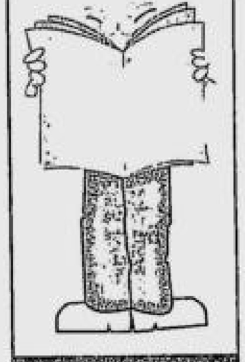

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OBITUARIES

"... absent with the body to be present with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:8

FELIX PLATA VILLANUEVA

*Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on May 24, 2003 at the age of 71.*

His loving wife **LITA ANDRES**; children **Liz** and **Alan Bengzon, Trixie** and **Raul Gonzalez, Perry** and **Tess, Frannie** and **Arnel Ignacio, Pinky, Rizelle** and **Ramon Carreon, Polly** and **Edwin Pelayo**; grandchildren **Tippi** and **Tim, Karl** and **Diego, Dada, Bea** and **Pie, Iggy** and **Bianca**; sisters, in-laws, relatives, friends and business associates request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Park Viewing Chapel #1, at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina.

Interment will be on Wednesday, May 28, 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park Marikina after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Chorillo Chapel, Gonzalo Puyat St., Loyola Subdivision, Marikina.

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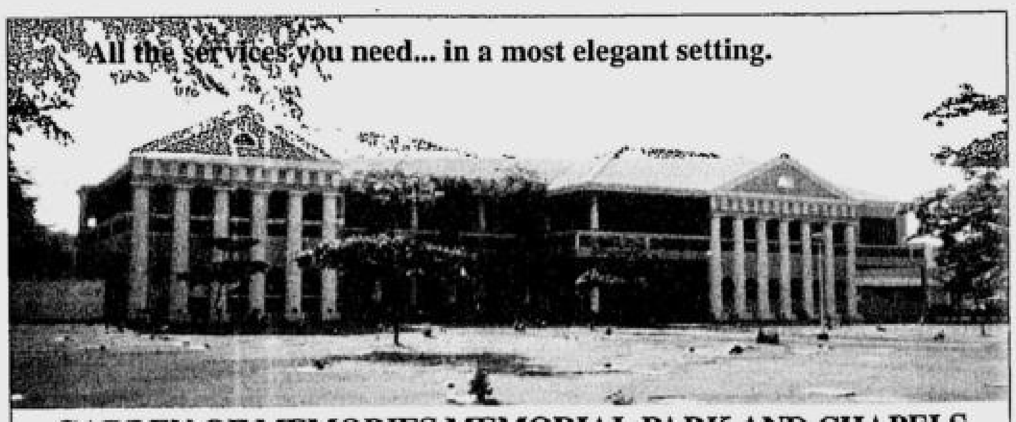

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and whoever
believes
in Me will
never die."**
John 11:25-26

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I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course,
I have kept the faith. — **2 Timothy 4:7**

ERNESTO T. CAÑIZA

Died in the Grace of Our Lord
on May 23, 2003.

His wife **Alexandra Y. Quirós**; daughters **Ma. Elena** and **Ma. Cecilia**; brother **Eduardo** and **Sylvia Cañiza**; father-in-law **Alberto Quirós**; brothers and sisters-in-law; nephews, nieces, other relatives and beloved friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

He lies in state at the Capilla del Señor, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park.

His remains will be brought home on Monday, May 26, 2003 after the 9 o'clock mass to the St. Joseph Parish Church in Canlubang, Laguna.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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DELFIN BARBO ROQUE

Died May 23, 2003
at the age of 75.

His bereaved wife **Felisa**; children and in-laws **Saldie** and **Blessie**, **Ronald** and **Roselle**; nephew and niece **Arnel** and **Emma**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for his eternal rest in heaven.

Remains lie in state at the Biñan Memorial Homes, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna.

Interment will be on Tuesday, May 27 at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, San Antonio, Biñan, Laguna after Holy Mass at 9:00 a.m. at San Vicente Church, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna.

**THE AUGUSTINIAN SISTERS
OF OUR LADY OF CONSOLATION**

Beg you to recommend to God in your prayers and sacrifices the soul of our dear

SISTER CLARA DAYANG DE STA. RITA, OSA

who passed away on May 25, 2003 at the age of 79.

May she rest in Peace!

FUNERAL MASS WILL BE ON
Monday, May 26, 2003 at 3:30 P.M.

AT THE LA CONSOLACION CONVENT CHAPEL
273 SANTOLAN ROAD, SAN JUAN,
METRO MANILA

INTERMENT WILL FOLLOW
AT THE LA LOMA CEMETERY
Immediately after the Mass

"I am the way, the truth
and the life. No one comes
to the Father
except through Me."
John 14:6

MA. LUISA "LOUIE" CANLAS-AUSTRIA

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on May 24, 2003.

Her husband **FREDDIE**; children **KATRINA**, **AMY**, and **RONALD**; mother **ROSARIO**; sisters and brothers-in-law **CORINNE** and **RENE**, **MAYA** and **INO**, **ANDREY** and **TOTI**; father-in-law **GONZALO**; in-laws **BETSY** and **HENRY**, **MARITA** and **JUN**, **TESS** and **BOB**, **LITO**, **DITAS** and **VIC**, **CHAT** and **ARNOLD**, and **MARTIN** and **LAURA**; nieces, nephews, uncles, aunts, cousins and best friends request the readers to pray for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her remains lie in state at the La Salle Greenhills Chapel, Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong. Interment will be on May 28, Wednesday, at the Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

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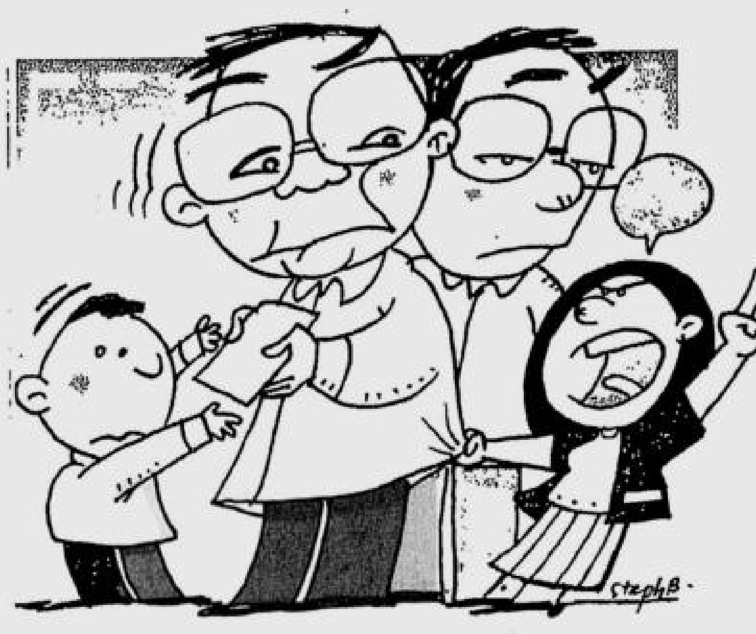

Comelec urged to reevaluate P1.3-B modernization project

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

A MEMBER of the technical advisory council to the Commission on Elections (Comelec) is set to release another open letter urging the poll body to reevaluate the bidding of counting machines that will be used in the forthcoming 2004 elections.

In the letter obtained by INQ7.net, Maria Corazon Akol expressed dissent to Comelec's awarding to MegaPacific eSolutions Inc. the winning bid of the P1.3-billion project.

Akol is also a member of the National Movement for Free Elections, and president of the Philippine Association of Data Entry Companies. She was also past president of the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines, an umbrella organization of local IT organizations.

The project in question is part of the P3-billion modernization program of the poll body. This project involves the purchase of at least 2,700 automated counting machines which will be deployed nationwide.

As a follow-up to on an open letter signed by several IT organizations, Akol this time wants the Comelec to address specific issues involving the eligibility of the winning bidder, MegaPacific; the alleged irregularity in the technical evaluation of the counting machines; and the supposed failure of the poll body to follow procedures it had set during the bidding.

Akol said that the Comelec should address concerns about MegaPacific's eligibility as a bidder.

Citing documents from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Akol said that MegaPacific was only incorporated on Feb. 27, 2003, a few days after the Comelec had a pre-bid conference where it distributed the bid documents.

The Comelec conducted the pre-bid conference on Feb. 18, 2003, a day after the poll body distributed the invitation to bid and the request for proposal to potential bidders.

Citing provisions in the request for proposal of the Comelec, Akol said that the bidders are required to submit audited financial statements for the past three years. It also required interested bidders to have a track record of an IT project with a value of at least P100 million.

"How can a company registered on Feb. 27, 2003 submit its bid on March 10, 2003 audited financial statements for the past three years?" Akol pointed out.

On the technical evaluation of the counting machines submitted by both MegaPacific and the Total Information Management (TIM)-led consortium, Akol said that the Bids and Awards Committee of the Comelec reported that both companies supposedly failed the mandatory requirement on the accuracy for the counting machines.

"On this technical aspect alone, a failure of bids should have been recommended by BAC," said Akol.

Akol also noted that there was a "glaring irregularity" and undue haste in which the Notice of Award was given by the Commission en banc prior to the submission of the report of the BAC on the technical evaluation of the bids.

She said that the Commission en banc, based on Resolution No. 6074 dated April 15, 2003, awarded the contract to MegaPacific but the evaluation report was submitted only on April 21, 2003.

In a previous interview by INQ7.net with Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. following a forum, the official said that the poll body has not signed any contract with MegaPacific.

"So what is the basis for the Commission en banc to submit the notice of award to the winning bidder without the recommendation of the bids and awards committee," Akol said.

Akol also said that during the testing of the counting machines, which was supervised by the DOST, the equipment tested was allegedly a prototype and was not the same machine in the proposal.

During a forum, Abalos defended DOST's testing, saying the Comelec is scheduled to test 30 counting machines that will be brought in by MegaPacific in July.

He asked IT organizations to "reserve their comments" until the Comelec finishes evaluating MegaPacific's counting machines.

"We consider these blatant violations in the whole bidding process as serious flaws that redound to utter disrespect for the government's bidding procedure. We want to uphold the rule of law. No matter how arbitrarily rules are formulated, once promulgated, they should be upheld. We cannot whimsically change the rules in the middle of the game for expediency," Akol said.

Akol urged the Comelec to declare the bidding a failure and re-bid the P1.3-billion project.

Meanwhile, Fortunato dela Peña, undersecretary for ICT of the Department of Science and Technology, urged Comelec to confront the issues and questions facing them.

"The Comelec modernization is a complex project. With such a complicated task at hand, there are instances when you'll commit mistakes. But you should know how to react if people will ask questions," Dela Peña said.

Dela Peña told INQ7.net previously that based on the DOST's tests of the counting machines, MegaPacific scored the highest, thus won over TIM.

"The Comelec had sufficient basis to declare that (MegaPacific's counting machine) is better. I believe that the results of the bidding is accurate, although we don't have the power to recommend anything to the Comelec," Dela Peña said.

"Although the issues raised by the IT organizations are reasonable, I would feel disappointed if this project would be re-bid or declared null and void. The testing was fair, the process was fair, although we're not involved in the decision making," he added.

Dela Peña said the Comelec is not favoring any vendor. "There is no basis to this allegation. As a private citizen, I'm happy with the result of the bidding."

An open letter to Abalos was published last week.

The letter was signed by the IT Foundation of the Philippines (ITFP), the Philippine Electronics and Telecoms Federation of the Philippines (Petef), Government for IT (GoIT), the IT Association of the Philippines (Itap), and the Philippine Association of Data Entry Companies (Padec).

The groups wanted the Comelec to probe into alleged irregularities in the bid to supply Comelec the counting machines.

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Ragnarok Online: A first glance

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

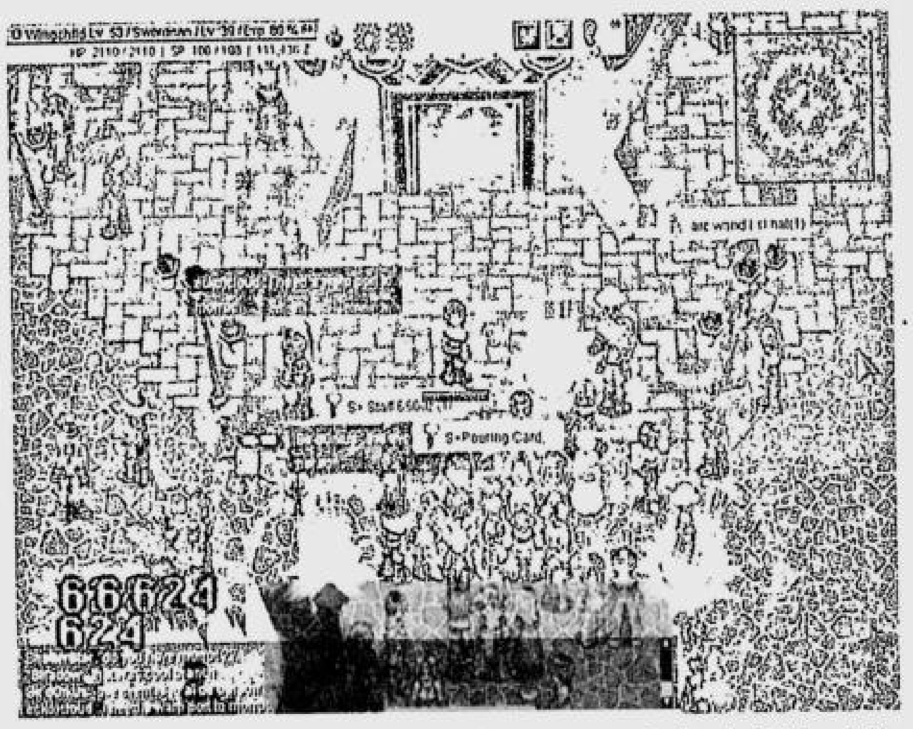
FIRST, I must admit that this is the first time that I've played a massively multi-player online role-playing game (MMORPG). Considering that this is just a preview of the online game, it will only give you a feel of the game, but will not give a lot of details about game play. I will have more to say when the beta version of the game is released on June 1 in the Philippines. This preview is based on the US-version. The June 1st launch will feature the Philippine version of the game.

Developed by Gravity, Ragnarok Online is similar to Everquest, where you assume a character, in this case, several of them. Once you've chosen the look, the characteristics and the qualities of your character, you can now join a virtual world where you are expected to kill monsters to gain strength and items.

As a background, this game is based on Myung Jing Lee's best-selling Korean comic book of the same title. So it must be a plus if you already have a copy of this Korean comic book (I'm not sure if there is an English version).

The story picks up at a point when the war between humans, demons and gods is coming to an end. The war, just like any other wars, has caused collateral damage on the world called Midgard. Somehow, the human beings were able to forge a truce with the gods and demons.

A millennium has passed since the last great conflict. Humanity has prospered peacefully in this uneasy truce.



This period of peace, however, would not last, as human beings became arrogant. They forgot about the miseries and hardships of war, and peace eventually breaks down in several places in Midgard.

Somehow the winds of change have come, as the magic barriers that separate the worlds of man, gods and monsters have begun to weaken mysteriously.

Creature attacks have become more frequent, natural disasters happen one after another and unknown denizens have begun to roam the land of Midgard. The people have begun to speak in hushed tones, speaking of the world's impending doom.

To enter this world, you're first asked to choose you're character. I selected a male swordsman, adjusted his strength, vitality, intelligence, agility and dexterity to meet my requirements.

According to Carlo Rufino, pointman of local game publisher Level Up, Ragnarok Online has been designed to balance out a character's qualities. This means that if I chose a stronger character, it would be less intelligent. Very stereotypical, I must say.

Once I finished doing that, I began connecting to a US computer server, but due to the Internet traffic that day, I was often disconnected.

After several tries, I chose to start off with the tutorial. To get to the tutorial, you have to go to this special area where you will meet Leo Von Frisch. But I'm not sure if this would be the same guy you will meet when the Philippine version comes out.

One interesting feature here is that I could choose from three characters and play them separately as I see fit.

Here's a tip. Knowing a little bit of the game background is a plus before you go through the tutorial. This is because Von Frisch will be asking some questions that will test your knowledge of the game. So I urge you to read through the game at www.level-up-games.com, where you will need to register.

The tutorial, at some point, became boring and tedious. One has to read a small Windows pop-up and choose from several answers. So this is a feature which I think Level-Up can improve when it comes out with the local version.

Since I wanted to begin playing, I skipped the tutorial and started playing the game. Unfortunately, my time ran out, as I still had story deadlines to meet that day. So I promised Level-Up that I would come back and see more of the game when it becomes available locally.

Anyway, Rufino gave a lowdown on things people should expect in the game. Aside from the wonderful 3D graphics and the cute characters, Ragnarok Online offered an interesting treat for hardcore online gamers who have no access to games like Everquest.

One thing that stuck with me while I was going through the tutorial is that I have to gain enough skills to just sit in this game. Perhaps you'll have to earn more points to run, or skip, or even sleep!

As a newbie, Rufino told me that I have to work for all the skills needed in this game.

"If you learn to sit, you can quickly recover hit points," he said.

That makes sense.

He also told me that the game essentially revolves around several activities: killing monsters and trading items for money (Zeny is the currency in Midgard).

"You really have to kill monsters to earn more points, and collect items along the way," one of Level-Up's resident gamers advised.

I still have to explore the many facets of this game, but based on this preview, I would likely get hooked on this game because it is open-ended, where rules could be made or broken.

In fact, Level-Up said that people could form clans to battle other players.

So what will happen if you die in this game? You spawn in another town, or saved point. But this time, you lose some of the things you've gained.

We'll tell you more about Ragnarok Online when it becomes available locally.

AMA answers back after being sued by STI

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

THE LEGAL counsel of local computer school AMA Group of Companies reiterated that rival school Systems Technology Institute (STI) through subsidiary iAcademy, is "barking up the wrong tree" when it decided to sue the officers of the company for libel.

Basilio Almazan Jr., chief legal counsel of AMA Group, said that the complaint against the officers of the school was "baseless."

Almazan said that AMA has yet to file a counter-affidavit in response to the complaint filed by STI with the Makati City Prosecution Office.

Last week, iAcademy Dean and Chief Operating Officer Mitch Andaya filed a libel complaint against officers of AMA Educational Systems Holdings Inc., namely Amable Aguiluz IX, Cielo Aguiluz, Ma. Angela Aguiluz, Vicente Acsay and Alberto Buenviaje.

The complaint was based on paid advertisements by AMA, which appeared on various local newspapers on May 9.

The advertisement stated that since AMA has been granted exclusive license by iCarnegie Inc. to offer its course modules in the Philippines, AMA was the only rightful entity that could use the trademark, trade name, logo and other intellectual property rights of iCarnegie in the country.

The newspaper ad warned the public against alleged claims of iAcademy and its affiliates as exclusive licensee of iCarnegie. It also characterized "any act of iAcademy in connection with iCarnegie as false, misleading and deceitful."

The May 9 advertisement prompted STI, through iAcademy, to lodge the complaint.

In an interview with INQ7.net, Almazan said that the May 9 disclaimer by AMA was in reaction to an earlier paid advertisement by iAcademy in a local newspaper on April 27, 2003.

Almazan said that AMA's May 9 paid advertisement was "premised on the fact that (AMA) had signed an exclusive agreement with iCarnegie on April 21, 2003, and nobody can claim that they are also offering it."

In a briefing last week iCarnegie Inc. president and CEO Allan Fisher announced that it has terminated its exclusive contract with iAcademy after signing a partnership with AMA on April 21, 2003.

Asked by local reporters to comment on the iAcademy-iCarnegie partnership, Fisher said that while the academic relationship between STI and iCarnegie went well, the business side of the agreement did not go "as planned," prompting iCarnegie to terminate the contract with iAcademy.

Almazan said that iAcademy's full-page newspaper advertisement was "deceitful, misleading and false" because AMA had already signed an exclusive contract with iCarnegie on April 21, 2003.

"We assume that STI knew that we already have signed an agreement with iCarnegie," he added.

Andaya, however, maintained that they only knew about the agreement after the May 9 advertisement had come out.

He also noted that the notice from iCarnegie of the termination of its contract with iAcademy was dated May 6, 2003.

"Even before May 6, 2003, we're still an official partner of iCarnegie," stressed Andaya. "AMA could have informed us that they have already signed a contract with iCarnegie. Does it have to be in the newspapers? They could have served us a legal notice."

Almazan, however, said that the paid advertisement posted by iAcademy on April 27 was "deceitful" since he believes STI officials knew about the negotiations between iCarnegie and AMA.

"We came out with that disclaimer (May 9 advertisement) because iAcademy's advertisement might have affected the public perception about our partnership with iCarnegie," he said.

Andaya denied Almazan's claim.

Moreover, when asked if they knew that iCarnegie and STI were renegotiating on new licensing terms up until April 21, 2003, Almazan said AMA did not know about it.

STI and iCarnegie (previously known as Carnegie Technology Education) signed an exclusive course license agreement on Oct. 2, 2001, documents obtained by INQ7.net showed.

On Sept. 4, 2002, STI and iCarnegie, signed another agreement, amending the course license agreement it had on 2001.

iCarnegie is a subsidiary of Carnegie Mellon University. It offers Internet-based learning and certification for software developers through partnership institutions worldwide.

STI offered iCarnegie course modules through iAcademy, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary.

Johnny Ramos, vice president for marketing of AMA Group, said that the school will integrate the iCarnegie course modules to its computer science course.

At least 10 modules will be offered to AMA computer science students, starting September, he added.

Ramos also noted that AMA has begun training its faculty in preparation to the roll-out of the iCarnegie courses at AMA.

To date, AMA has 46 Colleges nationwide and one university. The total number of its college students is about 64,000, according to Ramos.

Displaying values in Excel Autoshapes

POWERTIPS

By Jerry Liao

DO you want to make a certain value really stand out in your Microsoft Excel worksheet? Put an Excel Autoshape inside. Here's how:

1) Open an Excel worksheet. Type your data and formulas.

2) For this example, let us say your formula is on cell J15

3) Go to your drawing toolbar, click on Autoshape, and select any Autoshape you want

4) Drag the mouse within your worksheet and the Autoshape you selected will appear

5) Go to your formula toolbar, and click cell J15.

6) The value inside J15 will now be displayed as part of your Autoshape.

7) Right-click your mouse button inside your Autoshape

8) Select Format Autoshape. Change your Font Style and Size then click OK.

9) If the content of J15 changes, the graphic will reflect the change.

* * *

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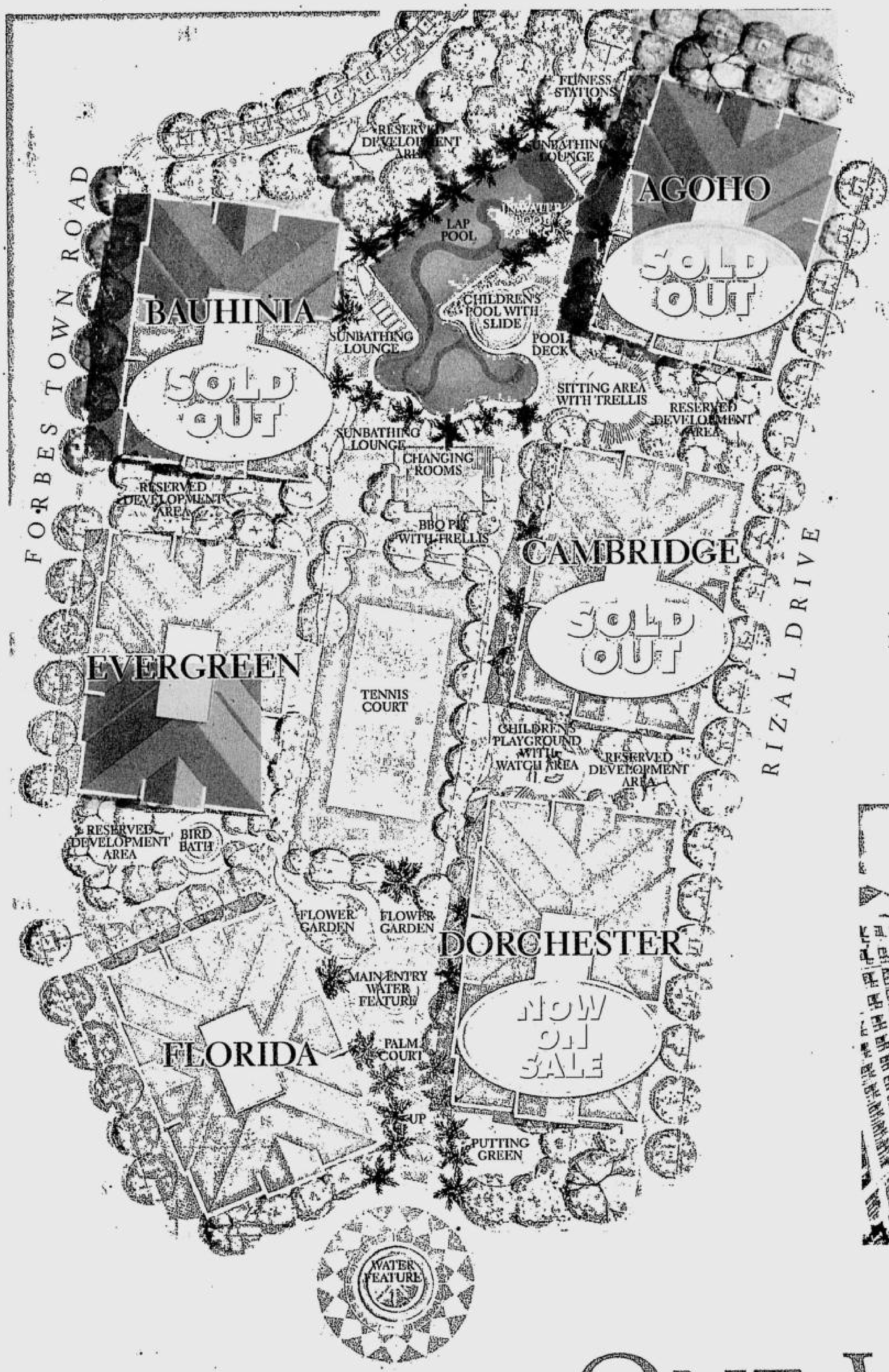
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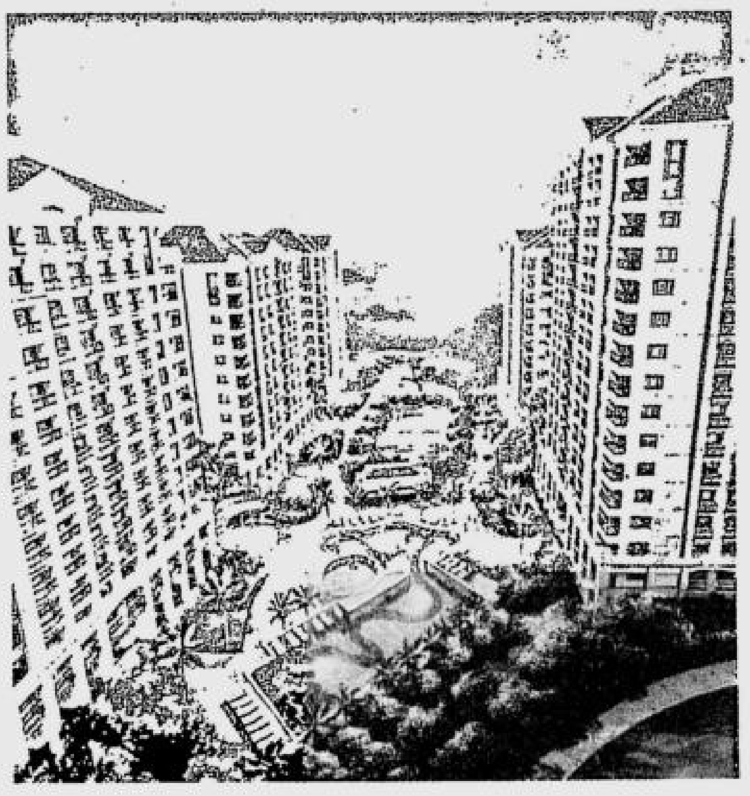

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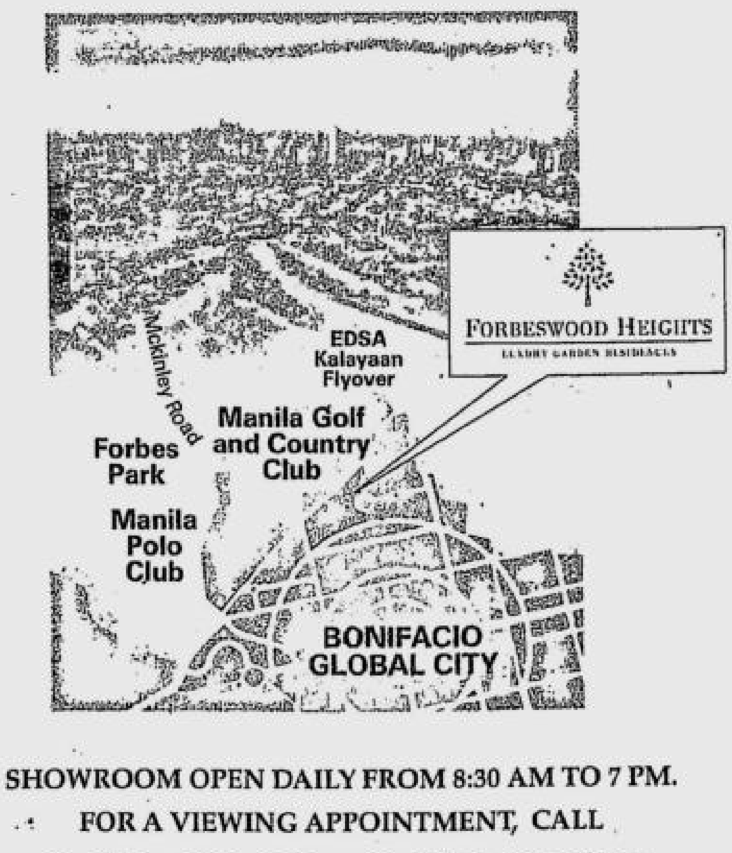
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Steps to take when launching a product

By Marco Angelo J. Rasos
Contributor
UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries

YOU have a great product in your hands, you know it is going to sell but you do not know how to introduce it.

Here are some steps to get you to the profit line:

1. Prepare for war

If you fail to prepare, you are preparing to fail. So prepare! And prepare to win! Just like how a soldier prepares before going to battle, in much the same way must you prepare yourself, your company and your product for the war in the marketplace.

GROWING YOUR BUSINESS

For the small business, the marketplace is more of a war zone, than a playground. This is where consumers either shoot you down or allow you to get their attention and their money.

The most crucial thing you need to prepare before going to war is to :

Review your marketing-Battle Plan. Your marketing plan is your battle plan on how your product will win. It must detail the following:

Who is your target market? Studies show that SMEs launch products without having a clear idea of whom they want to sell to. Even companies with mega-ton-marketing budgets do targeting.

Who are the people who should be on your team to make victory possible? You must identify specific people doing specific steps towards conditioning the target customer to like your product and eventually buy it.

Where will you engage target customers or where will they see your marketing efforts and buy your products (promotion and distribution points)?

When will you engage them or what is your timing strategy? Timing is a very crucial element in the plan. Many times product interest has been aroused through promotions but to the customer's dismay it is not yet available in the stores. Your timing efforts should be contained in a schedule or calendar.

What tools of marketing and promotions are you going to use to inform, interest and persuade your target customer to buy your product?

2. Choose tools for marketing

My observation of SMEs with limited marketing budget shows that many small firms use only five to ten of more than 100 promotional tools available to them at very low costs.

Here are some promotional tools you can choose from: name, product niche, color, identity, package, size, décor, attire, pricing, business card, stationery, order form, inside signs, outside signs, hours of operation, days of operation, phone demeanor.

Consistency, neatness, location, window displays, service, community involvement, tie-ins with others, special events, testimonials, smiles, greetings, sales presentation, refreshments offered, financing availability, clubs, samples, demos.

Seminars and lectures, contests, jingles, booths for mall/streets, roadside stands, classified ads, yellow pages ads, direct mail postcards, newsletter, and many more. (More tools from the Guerrilla Marketing Attack by J.C. Levinson.)

Whatever promotional tools you use, what is more important is the impact of your content or the power of the words of your marketing. Research shows some words to be effective in in-

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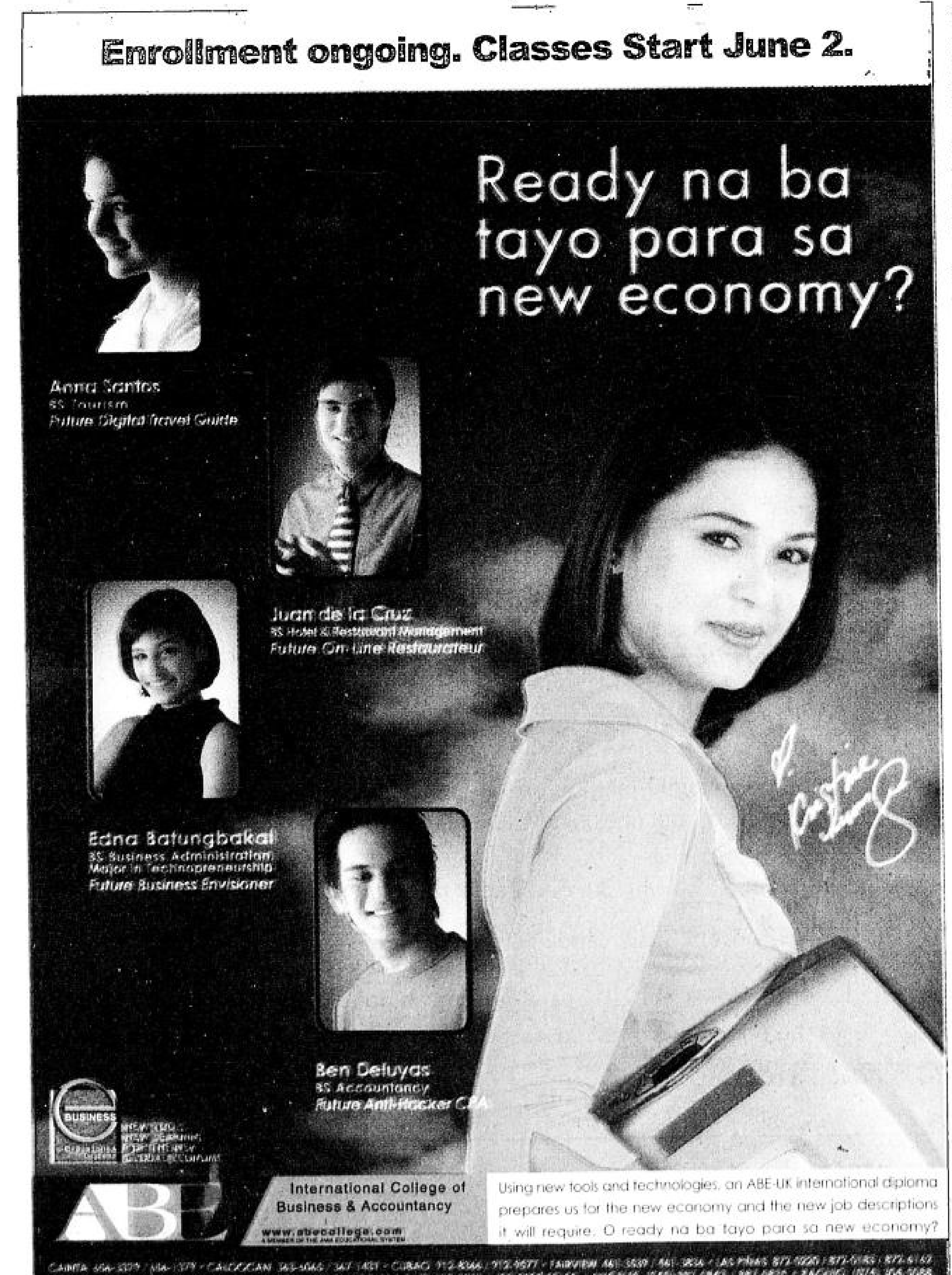

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Integrating indigenous people in an economic equation

The thrust of my leadership is to enhance and sustain business partnerships and to help promote a culture of entrepreneurship in the Philippines. Hence, the MAP Board of Governors is doing its best to introduce new projects this year that can re-energize alliances between and among entrepreneurs and corporations, civil societies and organizations and improve our economy through new business development initiatives and expansion.

Most of our existing and continuing projects (e.g., monthly meetings, management development, national issues, corporate governance fora) are dedicated to MAP members. Our Association's Management Educators Workshops cater to the academe. We have scholarship programs that benefit intellectually deserving students from less privileged families. Our Consult MAP program allows us to build linkages with the government and local government units toward effective local governance. We also deal with civil society organizations for projects on varied causes for the common good.

The MAP has touched almost all sectors of Philippine society, except our indigenous brothers. With rapid globalization, with its concomitant by-product of cultural homogenization, it has become imperative to reconcile cultural survival with technological advances. It is essential that a safety net be established to mitigate the loss of traditional cultures and knowledge.

MAP can be a catalyst to protect endangered indigenous heritage twinned with our threatened flora and fauna by promoting broader consciousness and appreciation of the value of ethnic diversity and the importance of cultural pluralism for peace and sustainable development. It is only appropriate for MAP, which is in the forefront of business leaderships to be in the vanguard of confronting and helping transform their social reality of neglect, if not exclusion. MAP's resources and expertise can be harnessed to help recognize and preserve the wealth of indigenous wisdom, values and experience of living in harmony with our fellowmen and mother earth.

Recognizing and expressing concern for the plight of indigenous peoples is a question of social justice to provide equity of opportunities to this marginalized and often forgotten sector of our nation. MAP has the capacity to creatively push for the upliftment of their condition through partnerships that can advance their welfare in education, livelihood, employment, housing, communications, respect for their ancestral lands.

MAPPING THE FUTURE

By Edward L. Fereira

MAP accepts this challenge particularly as we put to a close the United Nations' decade for indigenous peoples (1995-2004). As the decade commences, MAP begins its collective will to champion the cause of advancing the human rights of indigenous peoples. A giant step has already been undertaken by institutionalizing the S.O.I.L. Awards that will recognize inspiring leadership to overcome social discrimination.

Through Malacañang's Administrative Order No. 28, the S.O.I.L. Awards were first started in 1993, as a project of the EarthSaver's Movement with International Theater Institute (ITI) and the Tribal Communities Association of the Philippines (TRICAP), in conjunction with the then Offices for Southern and Northern Cultural Communities, now National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and the Office on Muslim Affairs with Department of Foreign Affairs under the patronage of the Office of the President.

A S.O.I.L. Awards Foundation is in the process of creation to serve as a conduit for a Permanent Endowment Fund that will ensure the awards' sustainability. MAP can make an impact on the national scene and the global stage as it paves the way for a paradigm shift in addressing their grievances with a unique poverty alleviation program through celebrating achievement and integrating indigenous peoples in an economic equation.

(The author is president of the Management Association of the Philippines and president and CEO of Ferycor International Management Group Inc. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

Steps to take when launching . . .

From page B2-1

troducing new products.

3. Use effective words

What you say or do not say in your marketing can make or break your great product. Your message should explicitly say that what you are offering is NEW. If you do not say so, your target market will definitely not know.

Your message should convey that you are EXCITED about your product, remember excitement is contagious. Also, you should explain why your product/service is new and why it is GOOD or why it is better than competition.

Your message is supposed to be directed to your target market not just to anyone. Construct your message as though you were speaking to just one of your prime targets. Use words and concepts that they use and that they understand in order to get their attention instantly and connect with them at once.

Here are some words you can use: new, original, latest, hottest, announcing, introducing, launching, first of its kind, and finally.

4. Attack with passion

After all the preparations, execute your marketing plan with strength and courage. Of course, be flexible. Be prepared to change your tactics on the battlefield in the light of real conditions but not your campaign. It might rain on your parade but that should not stop you from doing it again. Your family, your friends even your competitor might say that your marketing sucks—do not listen to them because they are not your hottest targets.

Stick to the battle plan. If you can't, do not start. If you are already in battle, keep your patience, patience, and patience.

5. Patience, patience, patience

According to a study, it takes around nine promotion encounters before your target customer considers to buy your product or avail of your service. (This assumes that your product is of good quality, your promo contains juicy information and your marketing is at the right places.) But your target market will notice only one out of three of the promotions that you do. If you (do the math and) planned to release one promo per week, that would be seven to eight months. That is a long time for SMEs, but you have to continue releasing your promotion, because the day when you decide not to release any promo might be the day your target prospect would finally want to make a decision, but unfortunately your promo is not there to lead him/her to your product and eventually to the cash register.

It is during this waiting period when doubts and doubtful circumstances and future failure scenarios will emerge and challenge your faith in your plan and in your product. Do not slacken if you have done your research well. Consider the doubts but do not entertain them. To help you ignore the things that will derail you from your mission, you must prepare for the victory.

6. Prepare for the victory

Preparing for the victory does not just take you away from discouragement; it also helps you focus on the most important part of your business—your customer. Whether you like it or not, your business needs the customer. They have the power to make or break your business. Treat them well (some even treat them like royalty), make them your friend, even your partner and they will sustain with harvests for a lifetime. If you have done your marketing well, your customers are coming! So, here are some things that you need to prepare for the victory:

You and your employees should be prepared to face your customer. If you value your customer or not, it will show from the way you answer the phone, your smile, your attire, your greeting when they enter the store/building, everything in between until finally when you say thank you.

Prepare your office/store too. Filipino consumer culture considers cleanliness a must for business establishments. If you are excited about your new product, and excited to meet new customers, then excitement should fill the air. Prepare your company through pep talks, demonstrations, role-playing exercises and practice.

Your customer list should be ready to be filled. The customer list should contain valuable information about your customer from his or her name (Of course!) to his/her favorite past time or pet or color. You have to decide what information you need for follow-up later, and the bases for your next marketing campaign.

An evaluation report should be in order during and after your campaign. This report is a chronicle of your activities, tools employed, schedules, digressions from the plan, manpower, man-hours, problems encountered, suggestions, comments, customer list, computations, expenses, revenues and profits.

A complete report of the campaign will provide valuable and indispensable insights into and about your company, your product and your market.

Introducing a new product in the market is fighting a war, you need to prepare your marketing/battle plan, choose the tools you need, choose only the effective words/weapons, be passionate in your attack, be patient and consistent with your attack, and while waiting prepare for the coming victory.

(For inquiries on small business management training programs, call the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries at Virata Hall, UP Diliman Campus, 9287076 and 9296923 or e-mail info.issi@up.edu.ph)

"Growing Your Business" is a weekly series for forward-looking small enterprises who need guidance in their expansion and growth stages. It is a service to the SME community by the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries.)

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Five years are what you need to finish law, MBA

POST-graduate students who intend to specialize in both business and law can save a year of study with the launch of the MBA-JD Dual Degree Program of the De La Salle Graduate School of Business and the Far Eastern University Institute of Law.

The course is designed for students who wish to earn a Juris Doctor Degree and a Master of Business Administration. DLSU--GSB provides the management education and the FEU-IL gives the legal and analytical training.

When taken jointly, students can complete both degrees in five years instead of the usual six, which equiates to savings both time and money.

Universities in the US started the practice of offering dual degree programs during the early 70s.

The MBA-JD Dual Degree Program will be offered beginning this school year. Classes will be held at the DLSU-GSB RCBC Campus in Makati.

Education Secretary Edilberto C. de Jesus was lauded by his colleagues for spearheading the dual degree post-graduate program while still president of the FEU. As he humorously yet aptly puts it, "The conceptualization and the launch are but a start. The hard work is about to begin."

Keynote speakers Cesar V. Purisima, chairman and managing partner of SGV & Co. and lawyer Ricardo J. Romulo, senior partner of Romulo, Mabanta, Buenaventura, Sayoc & De Los Angeles, both commended DLSU and FEU for the significant and meaningful tie-up that will further enhance the country's higher education program and in the process produce globally competent graduates.

Also present during the launch were Supreme Court Justice Renato Corona, Ambassador Sedfrey Ordoñez, Philamlife president Jose Cuisia, former Ateneo Law School dean Cynthia R. Del Castillo, FEU chair Lourdes Montinola, BPI senior executive vice president Aurelio Montinola, Jr. and noted corporate practitioners Manuel Montecillo, Teodoro Regala, Cirilo Tolosa and Saklolo Leaño.

During the program, Dean Juico introduced the members of the Council of Advisors, who shall provide guidance and assist in developing academic policies and directions for the MBA-JD Dual Degree Program. These are Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo; RFM founder Jose Concepcion, Jr.; retired associate justice of the Supreme Court Jose Y. Feria; lawyer Ricardo J. Romulo; Sycip, Hernandez & Gatmaitan managing partner Andres G. Gatmaitan; and ACCRA Law managing partner Eusebio V. Tan.

DEAN Andres Bautista, Dean Philip E. Juico, Francisco del Rosarion, Lydia Echauz, Edilberto de Jesus, Lourdes Montinola, Ricardo Romulo, Jose Concepcion Jr., Eusebio Tan.

Time-share business jet market hits rough patch

CHICAGO—The once high-flying operators of time-share business jets are in a nose dive so steep that investment guru Warren Buffett warns the industry will undergo a shakeout.

Buffett told Berkshire Hathaway stockholders two weeks ago that the holding company's NetJets unit, the largest seller of part-ownership stakes in business jets, is not expected to report a profit for all of 2003.

Buffett said he expects a shakeout in what is known in the airline industry as the fractional jet market, but said his company would ride out the turbulence, and not be "one of the shook."

The market has taken such a tumble that US business jet makers Cessna, a Textron Inc. unit, and General Dynamics Corp.'s Gulfstream announced plans to suspend production for a few weeks each because of slack demand.

"Orders were coming hot and heavy a couple of years ago, at a rate that could not be sustainable, which helped lead to a bubble that broke when the economy went down," said Paul Nisbet, a JSA Research aerospace analyst.

The single largest buyer of corporate jets worldwide, NetJets helped fuel the business jet market boom through the late 1990s with huge orders, and jet makers are still counting on future deliveries to the company, analysts say.

Outlook

But the outlook has gotten darker as poor results over the last several months have worsened, J.P. Morgan Chase analyst Joe Nadol said Friday in a research note. The market for used jets continues to deteriorate and the fractional market has practically fallen off a cliff, with sales of new shares off 50 percent in the first quarter from a year ago, he said.

"Since most manufacturers depend heavily on deliveries to fractional operators over the next several years, this severe weakness is reason for concern," Nadol said.

The business jet market quadrupled in the 1990s' boom to about $12 billion in annual revenue. It may shrink 50 percent from that peak before rebounding, with fractional ownership the single-largest part of that equation, said Teal Group consultant Richard Aboulafia.

However, Aboulafia said NetJets was in the best position of the fractional market. It still remains to be seen whether many operators can meet their commitments for new orders, he said.

"I would write off most of the backlog except for NetJets, and its ability to take planes depends on share prices firming up," Aboulafia said.

NetJets had 513 jets under management in March and has hundreds on order, valued recently at up to $1.8 billion. FlightOptions, the next largest fractional seller, has a fleet of 200 jets made by Raytheon Co.

Losses

NetJets posted a first-quarter loss, mainly on writedowns for the declining value of jets. Without the writedowns, core U.S. operations would have been "modestly profitable," while its European operations lost money, Buffett said.

John Odegard, a vice president at NetJets, said that despite the writedowns, NetJets operates the best jets, which would be expected to retain their value well through the first few years of ownership.

"While values are a little bit softer today than they were in years past, all the airplanes in our program are leaders in their categories in terms of how well they retain value," Odegard said.

Business jets range from a few seats to modified airliners that seat 18 passengers and have a full galley, conference room, bath and bedroom. Shipments worldwide fell 42 percent to 98 in the first quarter from a year ago, according to the General Aviation Manufacturers Association.

Partial ownerships have been likened to vacation condo time shares. But owners rarely fly on their own jets, rather they buy time on a certain model of plane; depending on availability, owners can be upgraded to a larger plane.

Reuters

There's a new order in the
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DHL: LEADING THE INDUSTRY THEN AND NOW

The Story Behind the World's No. 1 Express and Logistics Company

In 1969, just months after the world was marveling at Neil Armstrong's first steps on the moon, three partners took a step forward that would change the way the world would do business. Adrian Dalsey, Larry Hillblom, and Robert Lynn (D.H.L) revolutionized the delivery of letters and parcels by creating a simple way for documents and packages to be picked up from a customer's doorstep and sent directly to almost any destination in the world. Thus, an entirely new industry was formed when they started a company that handled door-to-door express via San Francisco and Honolulu. Little did the partners know that their company would grow into DHL, a multi-billion dollar business providing customers worldwide with fast and dependable package delivery.

DHL in Asia and the Philippines

Just two years after DHL opened its San Francisco office, DHL started its operations in the Philippines, opening its first office outside of the U.S. with the help of Rod Feliciano, a veteran entrepreneur. DHL was the first international air express company in the Philippines and all of Asia, and blazed the trail for the entire industry. With the opening of DHL International, offices were set up in Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, and Australia and DHL once again set the standard in the international air express industry. DHL was also the first courier company to deliver to China, an achievement that has already become a milestone in the air express industry. During this time, DHL expanded to service more countries in Asia, much more than any other air express company in the 70s.

As the years went on, strategic alliances were built with Japan Airlines, Lufthansa and the trading company Nisso Iwai. After 31 years of operation under the local agency agreement, DHL International established a joint venture company in the Philippines, which now puts operations here under a Global DHL direction. The joint venture opened a window of opportunity for DHL Philippines. By combining DHL International's edge over the rest of the logistics market and Rod Feliciano's 33 year of experience, DHL Philippines further strengthened its leadership position in the local air express industry.

Just as DHL had given birth to the international door-to-door industry, DHL is again creating a new industry with the introduction of the new DHL brand.

The Birth of a New Brand

In 2002, Deutsche Post World Net (DPWN), a profitable global player in mail, parcel and express services as well as logistics and financial services acquired DHL International. This was followed by the acquisition of Danzas AEI, one of the world's leading sea and airfreight forwarders. With these two solid companies under their wing, DPWN decided to consolidate their operations under the umbrella brand of DHL thereby resulting in a new industry category incorporating express, logistics, mail and freight under one integrated company. The new DHL brings together its market dominance in the region's express cargo business and customized logistics solutions together with Danzas' leading position in air and ocean freight and expertise in the development of customized industry-specific logistics solutions, global project forwarding, warehousing and distribution. The new DHL will act as a one-stop-shop — a single brand for all Express and Logistics activities via its combined sea, air and ground networks. The new brand carries everything that distinguishes a top service provider: know-how, innovative drive, and customer orientation.

To show the new face of the company, DHL has officially launched its new logo. The new logo retains the familiar dark red color and three stripes, which has become synonymous with DHL's value to efficiency and reliability. The addition of a bright yellow background signifies energy, modernity and dynamism; and represents the strengths of Danzas in the freight industry.

DHL: More service. More convenience

With the new look, come more enhanced levels of service to its customers. The new DHL provides the widest range of product offerings available to the customers of DHL and Danzas, making it possible for the new brand to meet growing customer demand for more sophisticated and customized logistics services in the country and in the region. Customers will now have the convenience of one source for the whole spectrum of express and logistics services across all time scales and weight levels. As a result, DHL and Danzas customers can expect a more comprehensive distribution service covering documents, small and large parcels and heavy-duty freight.

With the combined strengths of DHL, Danzas, and DPWN, DHL now offers more speed, more size, more reach, more experts, more reliability, more power and more efficiency. DHL's customers can expect to reap the benefits of this synergy as they take advantage of the convenience given by only one name, DHL.

DHL'S GROWING FAMILY IN THE PHILIPPINES: WORKING TOGETHER IN BUILDING A STRONGER COMPANY

A strong brand contributes to a company's success. They send messages about your company to customers and to the public, they create acceptance and most importantly, they clearly set a company apart from its competitors.

There are several components in brand building. But, teamwork and cooperation are the keys in building a well-recognized

There's a new global standard in express delivery, freight and logistics. DHL Worldwide Express, global leader in air express, Danzas, global leader in air and ocean freight, and Deutsche Post Euro Express, European leader in parcel delivery, have joined together under the name DHL to offer an even better all-around service. We can now offer you more performance, more service and more options in more than 220 countries. So whatever your needs, we can meet them. Call us at **811 7000** or visit us at **www.dhl.com.ph** to get the power of DHL behind your business.

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brand. It's a fact that behind every successful brand stands a team of dedicated employees who have the skill, expertise and desire to work together and make the brand come alive for its customers. In the air express industry, nowhere is this more evident than at the new DHL.

The new DHL is a result of a partnership between two of the most well respected brands in the transport industry: DHL Worldwide Express and Danzas AEI. The cooperation between both companies will firmly place the new DHL brand as the leader in terms of presence in 41 countries and territories in the Asia Pacific region and in more than 1000 locations. The new DHL is a people centric company, employing over 150,000 staff worldwide and over 20,000 staff in Asia Pacific. This translates to the widest coverage by any express logistics or freight forwarding company in the world, easily surpassing those of its competitors.

Similar to its contemporaries abroad, the synergy between DHL Express and DHL Danzas Air & Ocean in the Philippines results in a wider network coverage and a more extensive range of products and services for their respective customers. In the Philippines, DHL Express and DHL Danzas Air & Ocean jointly operate in over 120 locations nationwide and manage a combined total of close to 2000 employees. Filipino customers will also experience the same convenience DHL provides as the only source for all their express and logistics needs. The new DHL will be able to do more, delivering anything from a letter to a parcel to a power plant.

But, for customers to fully experience these new service benefits, DHL Express and DHL Danzas Air & Ocean will have to first rely on the teamwork of their respective employees to ensure that the new brand successfully integrates their respective strengths and passes on these strengths as advantages that their customers can utilize.

In the same way that DHL Express and Danzas AEI customers anticipate the coming together of both companies, their employees are likewise eager to begin working as one family or team in building the new DHL brand.

For DHL Danzas Air & Ocean employees, the coming together of the two companies is similar to one big family reunion. According to DHL Danzas Air & Ocean President and CEO Michael Raeuber, "As a new and growing organization, we believe that our growth will depend on the relationships forged between DHL Express and DHL Danzas Air & Ocean' employees. The new DHL is much more than a business partnership rather it is company composed of a tight unit working together towards a common goal."

DHL Danzas Air & Ocean employees share Mr. Raeuber's opinion. Nelson Pilar, one of the company's Tractor Drivers for several years now, welcomes the new DHL brand and sees the combination of both companies as an exciting development that will result in greater performance potential for DHL Danzas Air & Ocean. "*Masayang-masya ako dahil lalong lalaki na ang pamilya namin sa DHL Danzas Air & Ocean sa ilalim ng bagong DHL, at Dahil sa pinagsamang lakas ng DHL Express at DHL Danzas Air & Ocean, mas mapapaigi namin ang aming serbisyo sa aming mga cliente.*" (I am very happy that my extended family at DHL Danzas Air & Ocean is now growing under the new DHL, and because of the combined strengths of DHL Express and DHL Danzas Air & Ocean, we will be able to provide our clients with better service.)

DHL Danzas Air & Ocean Customer Service Assistant Neriza Santos is likewise optimistic of the new brand. "We are very excited to be working with our friends from DHL Express under one organization. Under the new brand, DHL Express and Danzas will grow stronger by providing our clients with products and services that only we can offer."

DHL Express employees are as enthusiastic about the new brand as their DHL Danzas Air & Ocean family members. DHL Express Key Accounts Manager John Manzano understands the importance of Danzas as a partner in further strengthening its position as the leader in the air express industry, but most importantly he sees the advantages of having Danzas as a member of the new DHL family. "With Danzas as an ally, we now have a wider scope of expertise in the industry, covering not just air express, but also air and ocean freight and total logistics solutions."

With the cooperation of all its employees, the new DHL is determined to take the brand to higher levels of success. DHL Express Country Manager Charles Brewer summed it up when he said "Our success as a brand will stem from how well we work together as a team. Under the new brand, we will all belong to one company, and as such, we will cooperate in every step of the business process. We are not just separate personalities in one big company, we are a family sharing one vision."

Despite the fact that the re-branding program is a continuing process that will extend throughout the year, DHL employees have already committed themselves to making the new brand an even more dynamic one, one that is synonymous to innovation, responsiveness, precision, quality service and teamwork. Already, the new DHL brand has brought positive things for its employees. Under the new brand, DHL has already begun to create more opportunities for advancement and skills enhancement for their employees.

DHL is continuously exploring ways to enrich the synergies between the two companies and have succeeded in growing and building on the expertise of their employees through the creation of a single business development team that now handles service customization.

In the end, the new DHL has gone beyond becoming a mere business entity, rather it has become a singular unit driven to become the best that it can be.

Deutsche Post World Net
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WE MOVE THE WORLD DHL

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SARS spurs upgrade of hygiene routines in RP

COMMERCIAL enterprises have upgraded their hygiene routines and cleaning techniques as a result of the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). According to JohnsonDiversey Inc., a leader in hygiene solutions, strong customer demand for disinfectants with virus-fighting capabilities shows that building managers are taking their public health responsibilities seriously.

"SARS has drastically raised public consciousness about indoor environments and how truly clean and safe they are," said Paul Mathias, regional president, JohnsonDiversey Asia Pacific. "SARS has served as a 'wake-up call' as people in Asia become better aware of the need to wash their hands more frequently and insist on proper hygiene management in the facilities where they live, work and play."

In support of the Philippines' SARS National Consciousness Week, JohnsonDiversey offers its "Stop SARS Seminars". Its objective is to focus on viral risk minimization through preventive measures. Participants will be shown how to apply cleaning products properly and the best way to scour critical points like floors, carpets, washrooms, public areas, reception desks, luggage handles, laundry and food contact areas.

"Viruses like SARS need a powerful disinfectant punch," said Marites Dagdag, Philippine country manager of JohnsonDiversey. "A proven anti-viral disinfectant and the right training can go a long way to abolishing easily transmitted germs in public places."

Dagdag also said many hotels and restaurants in the Philippines already use JohnsonDiversey's disinfectants such as Forward DC, Soft Care Instant Hand Sanitizer and Leverline Med Hand Disinfectant to ensure that the SARS virus will not thrive in their environment.

Other JohnsonDiversey disinfectants available in the Philippines include Virex II 256, Virex II 128, and Virex Tb. For food facilities, JohnsonDiversey offers a complete line of sanitizers and detergents for automatic/manual ware washing and food-contact surfaces.

JohnsonDiversey has been in the Philippines for over 34 years,and has been known for serving the industrial and institutional markets in their cleaning and hygiene needs. The company educates over 8,000 people in the food service, building service contractors, lodging and retail markets yearly about cleanliness. It can be reached at 891-4901 to 08 at its office at the 26th floor, BPI Buendia Centre, Gil Puyat Avenue in Makati City.

With operations in more than 60 countries, JohnsonDiversey is a leading global provider of cleaning and hygiene solutions to the institutional and industrial marketplace. More information about JohnsonDiversey and its products can be found at www.johnsondiversey.com.

AMERICAN STANDARD'S NEW PRODUCTS AT WORLDBEX 2003

Continuing its support of the country's biggest construction exhibition, American Standard recently sponsored the 8th Philippine World Building and Construction Exposition (Worldbex 2003). During the 5-day event held at the World Trade Training Center, American Standard displayed an array of new products such as Minis Close-Coupled Dual Flush RF, the Tizio One-Piece Dual Flush and Camille Dual Flush. The annual exposition is considered the prime opportunity for the world's leading bathroom and kitchen products manufacturer to open a bigger market and boost the building and construction business in the country. Shown (from left) are American Standard executives Pie E. Israel, advertising and merchandising manager, Lulu O. Topacio, VP for marketing and sales, Rep. Miguel Zubiri, Elvie Punsalang, projects manager, and Grace Andaya, projects trade officer.

ORAL-B EXHIBIT

Visitors stop by the Oral-B booth manned by staff and dental students at the 25th Asia Pacific Dental Congress at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City. As one of the major sponsors of the event, Oral-B is offering innovative product lines at discounted prices. The exhibit is one of the many activities during the congress that also, coincides with the Philippine Dental Association's 95th Annual Convention and Scientific Session. Oral-B is a quality brand of Gillette Philippines Inc.

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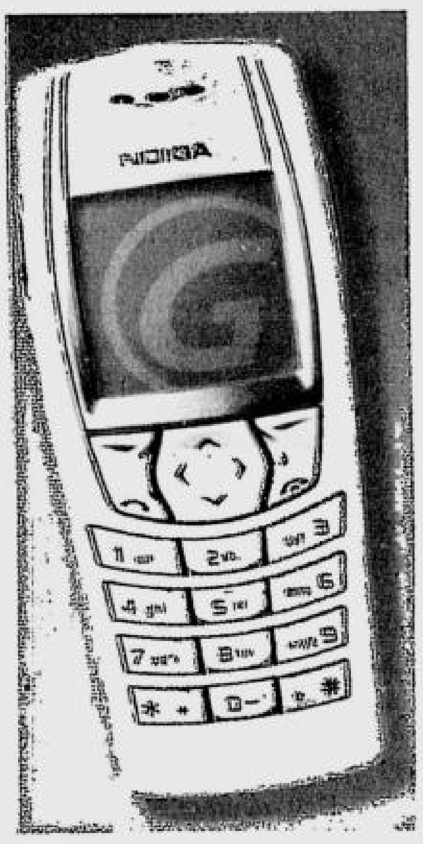


REMINISCE the long days under the sweltering sun and your fun, frolicking summer escapades. Too bad summer's pleasures can't last any longer. So why not catch the last breath of summer when you get the Nokia 6610 free at a G-Talk Plan?

Make your last summer stop at Globe Telecom Business Centers or the Hub stores nationwide before someone else beats you to the scorching hot deal of the season: limited from May 25 to May 28 only, you can get one of the sizzling handsets in the market today at a price that's gotten even better.

Explore the wonderful features of the Nokia 6610, now at an even better deal! Nokia 6610 now free on the G-Talk Plan just in time for you to savor the remains of summer's heat. For an affordable P1,200 monthly service fee inclusive of VAT and currency adjustment charges, The G-Talk plan lets you relish 350 free text messages and 210 minutes of free calls! But an even greater deal is getting the summer's greatest discounts on the newest and most sought-after handsets and the hottest colored wallpapers for free when you get the Nokia 6610 at any G-plan.

Trend conscious individuals who want a piece of the latest innovation in communication will relish the multimedia messaging system (MMS) feature of Nokia 6610. It allows you to send and receive photo messages of your summer adventures and download the hot summer grooves via polyphonic tones. It's the hippest thing to hit the mobile user's world! Aside from these remarkable features, the Nokia 6610 is also capable of downloading Java applications like cool games through mobile Internet and has a radio to boot, making it truly a phone to flaunt around!

Summer may soon be over but the great memories that came with it need not end, too. So keep the summer connectivity flame alive and give your last ecstatic summer hurrah with Globe, the leader in digital communication.

Shell sponsors corporate governance conference

PILIPINAS Shell Petroleum Corp. is one of the strategic partners of the 2nd Annual Conference of CEOs and Directors in Asia: Managing Corporate Governance in Asia slated June 5 and 6 at the Mandarin Oriental in Makati City.

With the theme "Asian Corporate Governance-The Emerging Structure: A Dialogue Among Asian Business Leaders on Global Standards and Local Practice", the conference will discuss the emerging structure of global corporate governance standards and how these are applied in local settings.

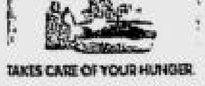
The two-day conference organized by CV Starr Chair in Corporate Governance in Asia and Ramon V. del Rosario Sr (RVR)-Asian Institute of Management (AIM) Center for Corporate Social Responsibility is a dialogue with Asian business leaders on the codes of governance being applied in Asia. It features dialogue with experts in the field, exchange of experiences with key business leaders, exposition showcasing successful programs of corporate governance, e-networking center, daily interactive poll on governance, plenary and breakout sessions.

DATU MARIKUDO 2003 MALE MODEL REVEALED

This summer, as always, sand and surf lovers were drawn to the pristine beaches and crystal waters of Boracay Island. What better stage, then, could be set for the prestigious Datu Marikudo Male Model Search 2003? Organized by Bess Tonel, overall project director of Match Production, the event was set against the Red Coconut Beach. In friendly competition, seven aspiring candidates took the vibrant atmosphere and stepped it up a notch as they competed for the title of Datu Marikudo. The event featured men's wear by top designers Renee Salud, Frederick Peralta, Barge Ramos and Lesage award recipient Dong Omaga-Diaz in a series of short fashion vignettes. Datu Marikudo 2003 went to Jan Castro (center) who also won most photogenic. Jo Neri (left) won 1st runner-up as well as best in swimwear, while 2nd runner-up and best in formal wear went to JR Mabasa. Sponsors for the event were The Manila Bulletin, Air Philippines and Red Coconut Beach Hotel Boracay, and supported by Coca-Cola, Viva Mineral Water, Artic Flavored Vodka, Salon de Manila, Davines, Heritage Arts & Crafts Kalibo, Aklan, AMA Computer Learning Center Kalibo, Rusty Lopez, Tommy Sea Sports Boracay, Willy's Beach Resort Boracay, Lorenzo Resorts Boracay, and media partners Magic 89.9, 104.1 Star FM Kalibo and Kalibo Cable. Shown are the winners in Barge Ramos-designed formal wear.

ProductFILES

McDonald's-Orbit tie-up



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MCDONALD'S now offers added value to its customers with its new promotion tie up with Wrigley, fit to go together for one's tummy and teeth.

Visit any participating McDonald's restaurant, and with every purchase of a McDonald's Value Meal customers will have a 2-pellet pack of Orbit Sugar-free chewing gum in an Orbit catch cover.

The McDonald's and Wrigley promo is available for dine-in, take-out, drive-through and 8MCDO delivery in participating McDonald's restaurants until May 30.

CELEBRATING 25 WITH NET 25

In commemoration of its silver anniversary as an ally of the banking public, Allied Bank intensifies its commitment to deliver unique and innovative products and services. This project is supported by Net 25, the UHF television station of Eagle Broadcasting Corp., which will implement an advertising campaign to promote the thrust of Allied Bank towards excellence, customer service and creating more value to the bank's growing clientele. Signing the MOA are (seated) Fabian A. Pagaduan, Allied Bank VP for corporate affairs and planning department, Reynaldo A. Maclang, Allied Bank president, Caesar R. Vallejos, Net 25 network marketing manager signing in behalf of Art V. de Guzman, network general manager, and Arlyn B. del Mundo, Net 25 sales manager. Witnessing the signing are (standing) Art E. Chuaunsu, corporate affairs manager, Anne Ferrer, corporate affairs assistant, and Rovic Canono of Net 25.

Bits & Clips

Alay kay Inay awards

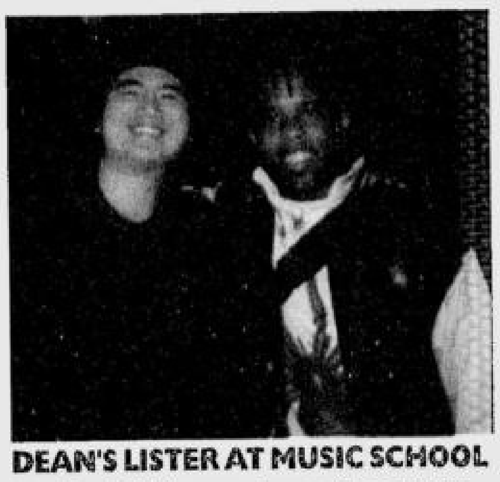
NOW on its 23rd year, the Alay kay Inay awards of the Golden Mother and Father Foundation (GMFF) will once more select deserving Filipino mothers from various sectors of society, to be given the citations Ina ng Bayan award, Celebrity Mother Award, Golden Mother award, and Ideal Mother-Achiever Award. The event is considered the country's biggest and pioneer tribute to mothers. Nominations are now being accepted. General criteria are: nominees should be at least 50 years old (except for Celebrity Mother award), must have at least a child who has brought the country into the international limelight, and should have a wholesome family and social reputation. For inquiries, call 404-2818/404-2302 not later than May 26. The Alay kay Inay Awards will be held on June 22 at the Erwin Lee Auditorium in the Ateneo de Manila University.

ASI Ruby finale

THE ASIAN Social Institute, a premier graduate school of economics, sociology, pastoral studies, pastoral sociology, and social work marks the end of its year-long celebration of its Ruby anniversary with a program highlighting its Diocesan Accompaniment Program. ASI, through Ric Laureles, will present its model of "Building a Basic Ecclesial Community Culture (BEC)." The day-long affair is slated on May 27 at ASI's Francis Senden Memorial Hall, with narrations of experiences with the accompaniment program of members of the Prelature of Libmanan, Camarines Sur and the Diocese of Masbate in their journey of faith for the past three years. A Eucharistic celebration caps the program, a fitting culmination to ASI's commemoration of its 40th anniversary.

Negotiation workshop set

EDSON & co. is sponsoring two-day negotiation workshops titled "Negotiation for Business Executives" on May 28 and 29 and July 16 and 17 at the Yuchengco Institute for Advanced Studies, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. This program, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., provides a framework for negotiation analysis and practice that can be applied generally to each participant's personal or professional area of interest. The workshop engages in a series of negotiation lectures and role-playing exercises that illustrate model problems in business which can be used for crafting cooperative agreements like collective bargaining agreements, term loans or purchase agreements. For reservations and inquiries, call edson & co at 878-8585. or e-mail info@edson.com.ph.



DEAN'S LISTER AT MUSIC SCHOOL

Karel Paolo U. Honasan, shown with acclaimed jazz musician Victor Wooten, recently made it to the Dean's List for the fall semester of 2002/2003 at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. To achieve this honor, a full-time student at the prestigious music school must achieve a grade point average of 3.4 and above. The Berklee curriculum focuses on practical career preparation for today's music industry. Established in 1945, Berklee College of Music is the world's largest independent music college. Honasan, a former student at the University of the Philippines College of Music, is concentrating on jazz bass guitar. He is the son of Sen. Greg and Jane Umali Honasan.

Finding the right people with a few clicks

From page B2-8

in selecting the best candidates for a job from a very big number of applicants so it is important to make use of available technology to improve the recruitment screening process.

"With Jobstreet.com, the initial screening of applicants is automated so only those who meet the Shell standards are progressed," explained Nava. "We don't have to physically go through hundreds of resumes just to get that one right candidate. There is a war for talent out there in the market. The company who has the cutting-edge technology in finding the right talent will gain an advantage over the others."

ESGUERRA

NAVA

Romulo new bank vice chair

PLANTERSBANK chair and chief executive officer Ambassador Jesus P. Tambunting announced the election of lawyer Ricardo J. Romulo as vice chairman of Planters Development Bank shortly after the bank's shareholders meeting held recently. Romulo replaces Jose P. Tambunting who continues to serve as a member of the board of directors.

Tambunting describes Romulo's new role as an "added dimension in our thrust to guide the SME sector's role in the expanding business landscape and prepare the sector in its drive towards global competitiveness". Prior to his election as vice chairman, Romulo was a member of the board of directors for 10 years.

The son of the late Gen. Carlos P. Romulo, he is a senior partner in the Romulo Mabanta, Buenaventura, Sayoc and De los Angeles law firm, hold a B.S. Degree (cum laude) from Georgetown University and A Doctor of Laws (JD) degree from Harvard Law School. He is also the current chairman of the influential Makati Business Club.

'Kamlong' . . .

From page B2-8

union from desiccation, and later splits as the stem enlarges, according to AVRDC experts.

All tomato varieties can be used as scions. It will be profitable, however, if the variety to be used should be selected on the basis of its acceptance in the market, high yield potential, and resistance to diseases.

In managing the grafted seedlings, they are placed first in a low-cost grafting chamber with relative humidity of 80 to 90 degrees Centigrade. They are sprayed with fungicide three days after the grafting process and then transferred, after seven days, to a hardening chamber where they will stay for three to four days.

The chambers, which use GI pipes and net, were developed by the AVRDC and their models built in CLSU. Experts involved in the project provide ready guidance for the construction of the grafting and hardening chambers needed for the development of the grafted "kamlong."

Field management

The grafted tomato seedlings, or kamlong, are transplanted in raised beds or plots at least 11 days from the time they were grafted. The beds or plots are 30 centimeters high from the base.

Way above the beds or plots are rain shelters. The main structure of the rain shelters, which arch above the beds, is made up of iron pipes. They are covered with mesh plastic nets.

Frames using GI pipes are calculated to last for at least 20 croppings while the nets can last for six croppings.

To conserve soil moisture and prevent the growth of weeds, the beds should be mulched with polyethylene plastic sheets or rice straws.

Appropriate holes in the mulch should be provided for transplanting of the seedlings.

Planting distance is one meter between rows and 50 centimeters between hills. After transplanting, each seedling should be provided with a stake that will serve as trellis of the plant.

Trellising will prevent the graft union from bending and touching the soil that may cause infection to the plant. It will also prevent the fruits later on from touching the soil surface that may damage them.

Pruning of the branches is suggested. Flooding twice a week is also suggested if there's no heavy rain or when the soil becomes dry during the growing time.

As for fertilizer application, it would be a better practice to incorporate organic fertilizer into the beds before transplanting the seedlings.

Application of inorganic fertilizer and appropriate chemicals is also suggested at recommended rates.

Sixty to 65 days after transplanting, matured fruits of the grafted tomatoes are ready for harvesting. Harvesting can be done weekly.

Cost and return

Studies conducted by L. G. Mateo, D. R. Camacho, A. F. Bala, T. M. Aganon, C. P. Aganon, G. A. Bruin, A. C. Roxas, and E. G. Marzan indicated that in a 1,000-square meter lot, cropping of grafted tomatoes on raised beds provided with rain sheter, a net income of P57,532.04 was realized.

The tomato harvest during their research work totaled to 2,260 kilograms. The return on total expenses was P1.75 for every peso of expenditures. The breakeven price for this venture was P14.54 per kilogram of tomatoes produced.

The researchers said that business-minded farmers, entrepreneurs or cooperatives might find production of grafted tomato seedlings as also an enticing agri-business venture.

They can concentrate on producing thousands of seedlings that they can sell to those who want to produce off-season tomatoes.

In their study, the researchers said the cost of producing 1,500 grafted tomato seedlings was only P3,887.70. This meant, they said, that the cost of producing one seedling was P2.59. The seedlings can be sold from P4.50 to P5 each, their studies indicated.

The only big expenses involved in the production of grafted tomato seedlings are materials and cost of putting up the grafting and hardening chambers.

The expenses in putting them up summed up to P19,347. But they can be used for 12 years which means that if these expenses were distributed over their life spans, the expense per year would only be P1,612.25.

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Finding the right people with a few clicks

FOR companies to succeed in today's highly competitive global market, the use of Internet technology is essential especially in finding the best people to fill vital positions in a company.

According to Jerome Nava, Recruitment Adviser of Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., online recruitment is the most efficient and cost effective solution to hiring and it is imperative that global companies like Shell use this tool to maintain their advantage in the global arena.

Pilipinas Shell is one of the first few among the Shell Group of Companies who have adopted e-recruitment as a standard in hiring. It recently tapped the services of JobStreet.com to help in this endeavor. Shell offices in Malaysia and Singapore also use JobStreet's job posting services on a regular basis.

JobStreet.com is Asia's leading online recruitment company with offices in Malaysia, Singapore, India and the Philippines. Its local database alone boasts a talent pool of more than 400,000 resumes. It has helped fill over 4,500 job vacancies to date - an average of eight jobs per day. JobStreet.com also has a constantly growing fill rate of 66 percent, which means that out of all the jobs considered filled by clients, close to seven out of every ten jobs are filled through JobStreet.

"We want to open our recruitment to a wider population and try to reach the deserving ones who are in the provinces. We are also open to applications from individuals not traditionally associated with the oil industry - women and the handicapped for instance. Having something electronic will give us that reach," said Joel Esguerra, Shell General Manager for Human Resources.

Esguerra noted that his department is servicing the human resource requirements not just of Pilipinas Shell but also other companies under the Group in the Philippines including Shell Exploration, which is spearheading the natural gas project in Palawan. E-recruitment facilitates the staffing of these offices and installations outside Metro Manila.

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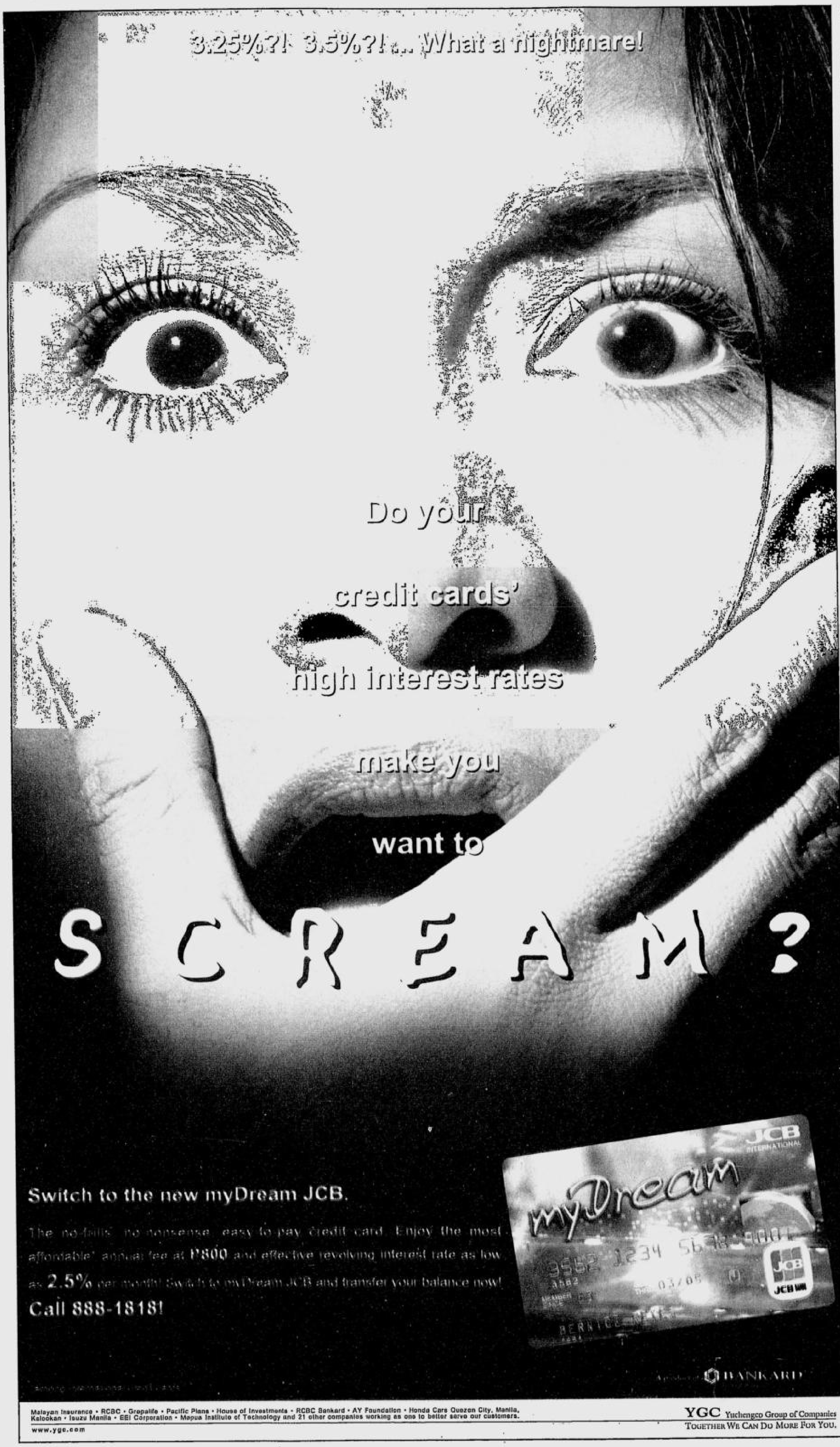
Nava added that unlike in other companies where academic excellence is the primary consideration in hiring, Shell puts a premium on other important qualities such as leadership. This puts added pressure

FINDING/ B2-7



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GRAFTED tomatoes ready for transplanting

PHOTO BY ANSELMO ROQUE

'Kamlong': Grafted tomatoes that yield returns

By Anselmo Roque
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SCIENCE CITY OF MUNOZ—Tomato is a very important and popular vegatable crop in the country. It is a vital ingredient in many sumptuous dishes and is also processed into various food products.

Farmers, however, usually grow tomatoes during the dry season. It always happens that at harvest time, the market is flooded with tomatoes bringing down their selling price.

Many tomato producers, therefore, end up holding empty bags at harvest time because of the glut. There are times when the price of tomatoes in the market goes down to as low as P2 a kilo.

When this happens, farmers do not harvest their produce anymore as they won't be able to earn enough to pay for the expenses for harvesting and delivery. It sometimes happens, therefore, that tomatoes go to waste in some towns of Nueva Ecija.

But during the good days, farms can earn as much as P72,635 per cropping per hectare for a harvest of 30,000 kilograms from tomato farming. This is based on a gross income of P120,000, minus roughly P47,365 in expenses for labor, material inputs and various operating and overhead expenses. The average production cost at this net income is computed at P1.58 per kilogram.

It is a pretty good profit from growing tomatoes, if the price of the commodity is right, that is.

There's one tomato production technology, though, that promises to be more enticing to farmers and entrepreneurs. The technology is for off-season planting and it involves the use of grafted tomatoes onto eggplant rootstock, rain shelters, raised beds, and polyethylene plastic or rice straw as materials for mulching.

Comparatively, the application of the technology provides a promise of good harvest and income.

Grafted tomatoes

Grafted tomatoes are said to withstand water logging due to excessive rains. They are also said to be resistant to bacterial wilt and other plant diseases.

The grafted tomato plant was introduced here by the Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center (AVRDC), which has been working on peri-urban vegeteble research project in tandem with the Central Luzon State University here.

The grafted plant was readily given here the name "kamlong," which is a contraction from the Tagalog names kamatis (for tomatoes) and talong (for eggplant).

In producing the grafts, the tomato plants and eggplants are first germinated in separate trays whose cells are filled with growth medium.

In the grafting process, three-week old tomato scions are grafted onto four-week old eggplants. The scions and the rootstocks are cut on a 30-degree angle above the cotyledons. The tomato scions and the eggplant rootstock are joined in their point of unions by a small latex rubber tube.

The tube holds the graft, protects the graft

'KAMLONG'/ B2-7

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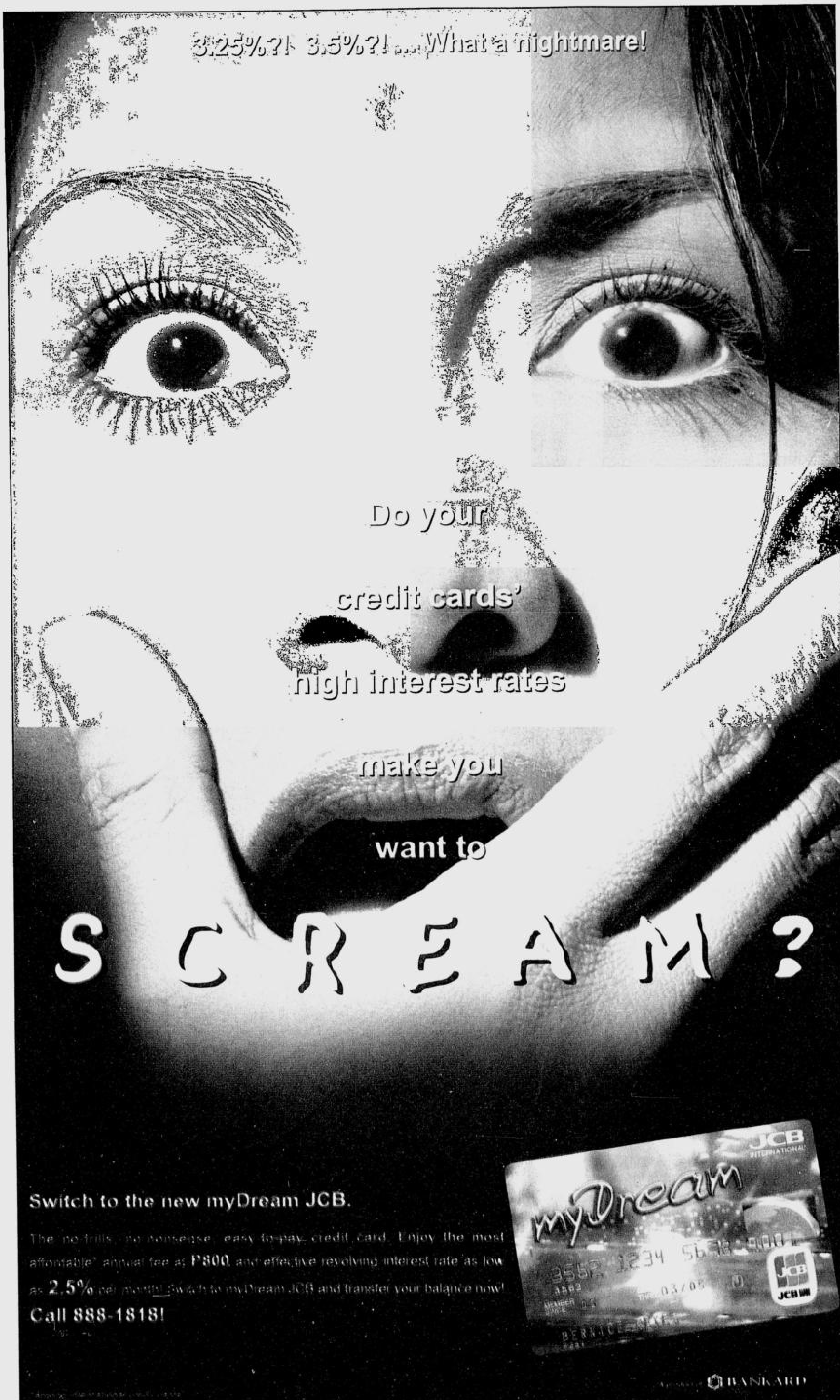

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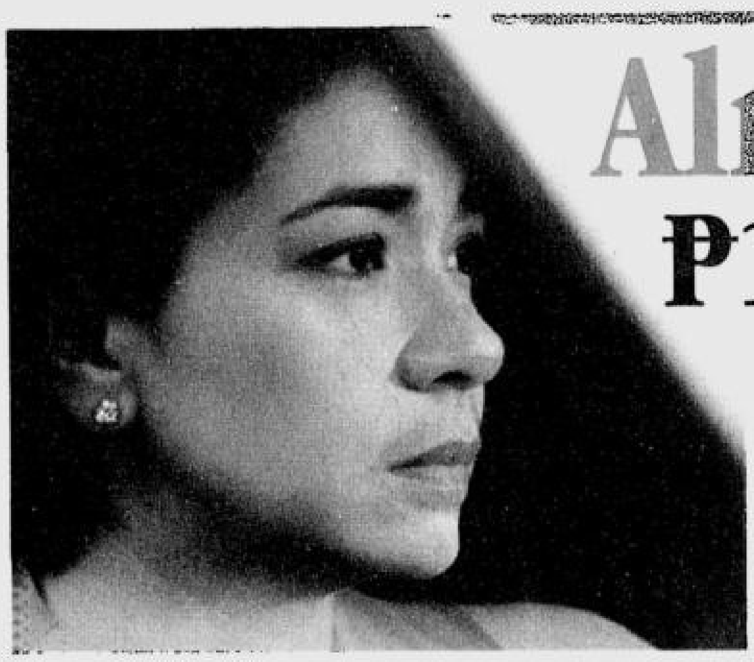
Editor **Louie C. Camino**



I'M NOT running away, says Alma Moreno
FILE PHOTO

Alma: I owe only ₱1.7M, not ₱8M

Creditors 'running after' Joey

By Leah Salterio

ALMA Moreno's creditors are said to be hounding her estranged husband, Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez, to pay for her obligations.

Joey has declared he would not pay back even a cent of Alma's debts, according to a source close to the mayor.

Alma admitted to Inquirer Entertainment that she owes money to some people, but not P8 million as has been reported on TV.

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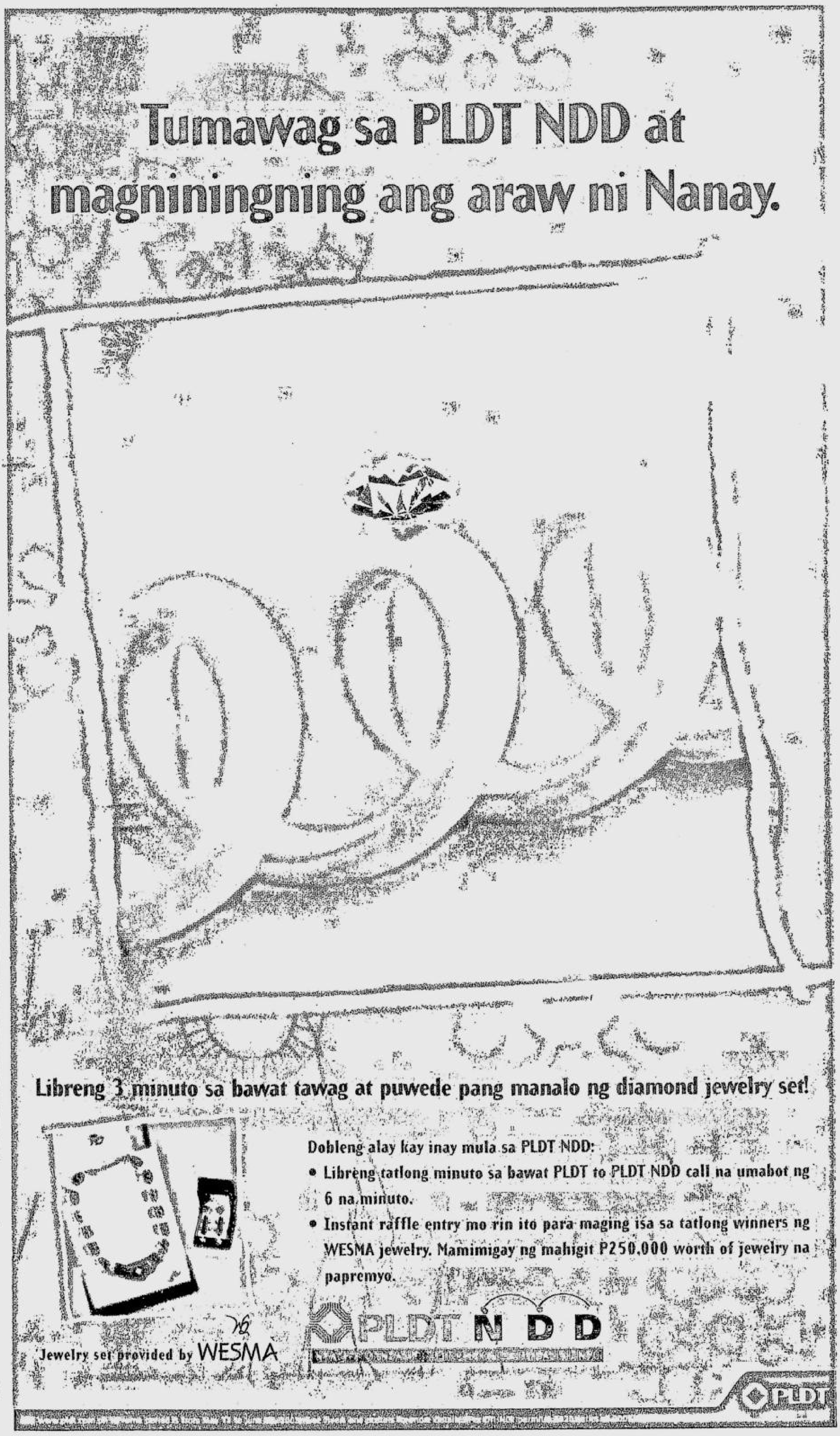
DID YOU KNOW...

Singer **Ogie Alcasid**, his Australian beauty queen wife Michelle and their precocious daughters were reportedly "banned" from Morita's Restaurant in Mandaluyong, which serves Spanish and Mediterranean cuisine. When the Alcasids first dined at Morita's, Ogie's six-year-old daughter Leila was reportedly running all over the place, which annoyed Morita's owner who reportedly prefers no-kids in her restaurant. The next time the owner saw the Alcasid family, who had made a reservation, the owner turned them away. Ogie and Michelle were said to be fuming mad outside the restaurant when they were refused entry. But the owner wasn't swayed.



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Young man sings old songs in new way

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Young man sings old songs in new refreshing way

COME FLY with new sensation Michael Bublé from Canada.

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

REVIEW

OLD songs, like old soldiers, never die. They just get revived.

But the trouble with reviving well-loved old songs is that the latest artist's rendition will forever be compared to the original singer, and many new artists are found wanting.

It takes consummate artists such as Rod Stewart ("The Great American Songbook") and kd lang and Tony Bennett ("What a Wonderful World") to be able to pay proper tribute to a song and yet leave their own indelible touches, making the song somehow their own, too.

Now comes Canadian singer Michael Bublé (boob-lay). He is only 25 years old and looks more like a boy band member, but he proves in his self-titled 13-track debut album (reprise/143 Records) that he is a worthy addition to this elite group of singers.

After hearing the first lines of Bublé's interpretation of Peggy Lee's "Fever," you just know you are in for an unforgettable musical experience.

And it gets better, as one can expect from an album produced by David Foster, the same multi-Grammy award-winning artist who produced albums of Celine Dion, Barbra Streisand and Whitney Houston. Foster's longtime collaborator Humberto Gatica helped out in Bublé's album.

After "Fever" comes Bublé's rousing version of Van Morrison's "Moondance" and a romantic take on George Michael's "Kissing A Fool."

It is also quite a pleasant change to listen to him put his tenor to Lou Rawls' classic "You'll Never Find Another Love Like Mine."

And just when you thought you have heard all possible versions of the Bee Gees' "How Can You Mend a Broken Heart" and Paul Anka's "Put Your Head on My Shoulder," Bublé breathes new life to these all-time sing-along favorites, with Barry Gibb even doing some background vocals on "How Can You Mend a Broken Heart," which Foster has given a '40s sound.

The songs blend well with staples such as "The Way You Look Tonight," "For Once in My Life," "Come Fly With Me," "Summer Wind" and "That's All."

It takes some kind of confidence for a young artist to take on these songs that became popular long before he was born, but Bublé pulls it off beautifully. Many thanks must go to the session musicians such as Brian Bromberg, who provided the rollicking bass line on "Fever," Gary Grant who played trumpet on "Moondance" and Heitor Padilla who provided the unique acoustic guitar accompaniment to "The Way You Look Tonight."

Some may find the choice of songs a little eclectic, as the album also includes Queen's "Crazy Little Thing Called Love" and old dance hall favorite "Sway" by Norman Gimbel and Pablo Beltran Ruiz, first sung by Dean Martin.

Bublé makes no apologies and approaches these songs the same way—with respect and a unique sensibility, a gift for which he credits his grandfather.

Bublé grew up with the music of artists such as Ella Fitzgerald, Keely Smith, Sarah Vaughan, Stevie Wonder and Frank Sinatra because these were the singers that his grandfather loved and constantly played around the house. His grandather was also instrumental in starting Bublé's musical career, convincing him to enter talent contests, which he won even if, in one contest, he was later disqualified for being underage.

By the time he was 17, he had won first prize at the Canadian Youth Talent Search, recorded and released a series of independent albums and became part of a US road company for Red Rock Diner and a musical revue titled "Swing."

Former Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, a fan of classic pop, introduced Bublé to their countryman David Foster. Bublé sang "Mack the Knife" at the wedding of Mulroney's daughter.

The young singer signed up for Foster's 143 Records through Reprise and work began on his major label debut in 2001. By February, the debut album was out.

"This record is not only a tribute to what I consider to be the greatest genre of music the world has ever heard, but also a tribute to some of the greatest songwriters and arrangers of our time," Bublé says in the album's notes. "It was an honor for me to sing along to the brilliant works. It really doesn't get any better."

Purists may argue that the original versions would always be the best. Late great artists like Frank Sinatra, however, would surely not roll in their graves if they heard Bublé singing their songs.

TOP OF THE LINE

Starting June 2, the Century Park Hotel brings back its singers for nightly performances at the Top of The Century (from left): Anne Castro, Saturdays; April Ramos, Fridays; Teresa Garcia, Wednesdays; Malou Manabat, Thursdays; Caren Molina, Tuesdays; and Martina Hernandez, Mondays. Shows are from Mondays to Saturdays starting at 9 p.m. For inquiries and reservations, please call the Century Park Hotel at (632) 528-5837 or (632) 5282739.

Spin artists cut competition in Beyblade tournament

SHOW TIME

FOUR Beyblade spin artists 7 to 13 years old emerged as the country's best Beyblade players in the "Beyblade Tournament of Champions" held last May 18 at the Activity Center of SM Megamall at Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City.

Declared champion in the ultimate Beyblade showdown after a five-hour competition was Brian Panaglima, who romped off with a P10,000 Beyblade showcase and a championship trophy, plus P10,000 in cash and a Game Boy Advance SP in lieu of the Kuala Lumpur trip for the cancelled Beyblade Asia Cup.

The other winners are Jorence de Vera, 2nd place, P8,000 Beyblade showcase plus trophy; Kazandra Panaglima, 3rd place, P6,000 Beyblade showcase plus trophy; and Adrian Enriquez, 4th place, P4,000 Beyblade showcase.

Brian Panaglima bested 63 other semi-finalists. The top four were the survivors of the best-of-three knockout match among all the semifinalists using five official Beyblade layers: bit chip, attach ring, weight disc, spin gear and original blade base.

Weekly Beyblade mini-tournaments will be conducted on June 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 at Pocket Collector at Glorietta, Makati and Kiddieland, 3/F Festival Supermall.

WINNERS (from left) De Vera, Brian Panaglima, Kazandra Panaglima and Enriquez.

ABS-CBN sings songs for unsung heroes

BAYANING GURO. Onofre Pagsanghan

ABS-CBN Broadcasting, with the Ugat Foundation, recently staged the Gawad Geny Lopez Jr. Bayaning Pilipino 2003.

Now on its sixth year, the awards are an affirmation of the Filipino's heroism and proves that there are still plenty of living, unsung heroes in the country.

This year's winner in the individual category is Erlinda Cabanal, a mission worker dedicated to educating the B'laan tribe, an ethnic group in the T'murok mountains of the Sarangani Province.

In the past 12 years, Erlinda developed a literacy program to teach the B'laan's to read and write, trained the women in first aid and the use of medicinal plants and guided the B'laans in putting up their own *sari-sari* store.

In the teacher category, Onofre Pagsanghan was honored for touching the hearts and minds of his students in his more than 50 years of teaching at the Ateneo de Manila High School. The founder of the esteemed Dulaang Sibol theatrical group, "Sir Pagsi" is also credited with helping enrich the country's heritage by encouraging his students to write plays in Filipino.

Caridad Bachiller, a contract worker in Hong Kong, received the award in the AsiaPacific category. A domestic helper and active member of the Abra Tinguian Ilocano Society in HK, Caridad has helped assist Filipino workers in the usual migration concerns that plague them and even helped typhoon victims in her native Abra.

The Villapa family from Brook's Point, Palawan is the family category winner. The Villapas, headed by patriarch Juan, have worked for the education, health and livelihood needs of their neighbors. His wife Lucia, a teacher for 39 years, and their five children have dedicated their lives to serving their community in their respective fields.

The Esperanza Multi-Purpose Cooperative was given the medal in the institution category. The group's main thrust is to ease the plight of farmers in their district and to empower their community to be self-reliant.

The winners were chosen from among hundreds of nominees from all over the country and including the Asia Pacific.

Korina Sanchez and Edu Manzano hosted the Bayaning Filipino Awards program, which featured the stories of the finalists. Sen. Noli De Castro, Charo Santos-Concio, Maricel Soriano, Judy Ann Santos, Willie Revillame, Cindy Kurleto and Cito Beltran were among the award presenters.

Basil Valdez, Freddie Aguilar, Carol Banawa, Calvin Millado, Jett Pangan, Anna Fegi, Bituin Escalante and Tex Ordonez sang.

Alma: I owe only P1.7M, not P8M

From page C1

"It's only P1.7 million," Alma said in a phone interview, adding that the negative reports about her were prompted by her decision to run for Parañaque mayor in next year's elections. She announced her political intentions last March.

"Everyone has debts," she added in Filipino. "Even millionaires owe money."

She swore she would not run away from her creditors.

"I might give delayed payments because I can afford to give only so much, but I won't run away from my creditors," she said.

"If there are really people running after Joey, why don't they give me names," she added. "Let them give me details and I will face them all. If you owe money, you should face it. It's important to be honest."

Alma yesterday celebrated her 44th birthday with a star-studded show in Parañaque.

Her husband Joey, 43, is on his third and last term as mayor of the city.

No proof

Alma reportedly used Joey's credit card and faked his signature when she shopped in the United States with her sister Debra. She is said to have accumulated bills totalling $11,000.

The actress also denied this.

"That was in Joey's petition for annulment," she said. "He was blaming me for a bill with that amount in his credit card, but he couldn't show any proof or document that I faked his signature."

She said she believes the negative reports about her are related to her decision to run for mayor in 2004.

"*Kung noon na nasa likod lang ako ni Joey, binibira na nila 'ko, ngayon pa na ako ang tatakbo,*" Alma said. "But I'm ready for it. I prayed about it before I decided to run. I know there are people who really want to destroy me, and it's sad that one of them is Joey."

With Kris

She said her husband tried to prevent some Parañaque community leaders and coordinators from attending her birthday concert last night at the Cuneta Astrodome on Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City.

"I know that he was trying to stop people who wanted to watch my concert," she said.

Joey was in Cebu City over the weekend, reportedly with Parañaque public school supervisors and teachers whose plane fares he paid for.

Joey's girlfriend, Kris Aquino, was also in Cebu to tape her ABS-CBN game show, "Game Ka Na Ba?"

"I didn't plan a birthday party, so I thought of putting up a concert," Alma said.

Her guests included Angelika de la Cruz and the other members of the cast of GMA 7's soap "Habang Kapiling Ka," where Alma is a mainstay.

Ex-partners

Couple Rudy Fernandez and Lorna Tolentino were also invited. Rudy is the father of Alma's son, actor Mark Anthony Fernandez.

Dolphy, who is also Alma's former partner, as well as Vilma Santos, Sharon Cuneta and Phillip Salvador greeted Alma on video which was shown during the Cuneta Astrodome concert.

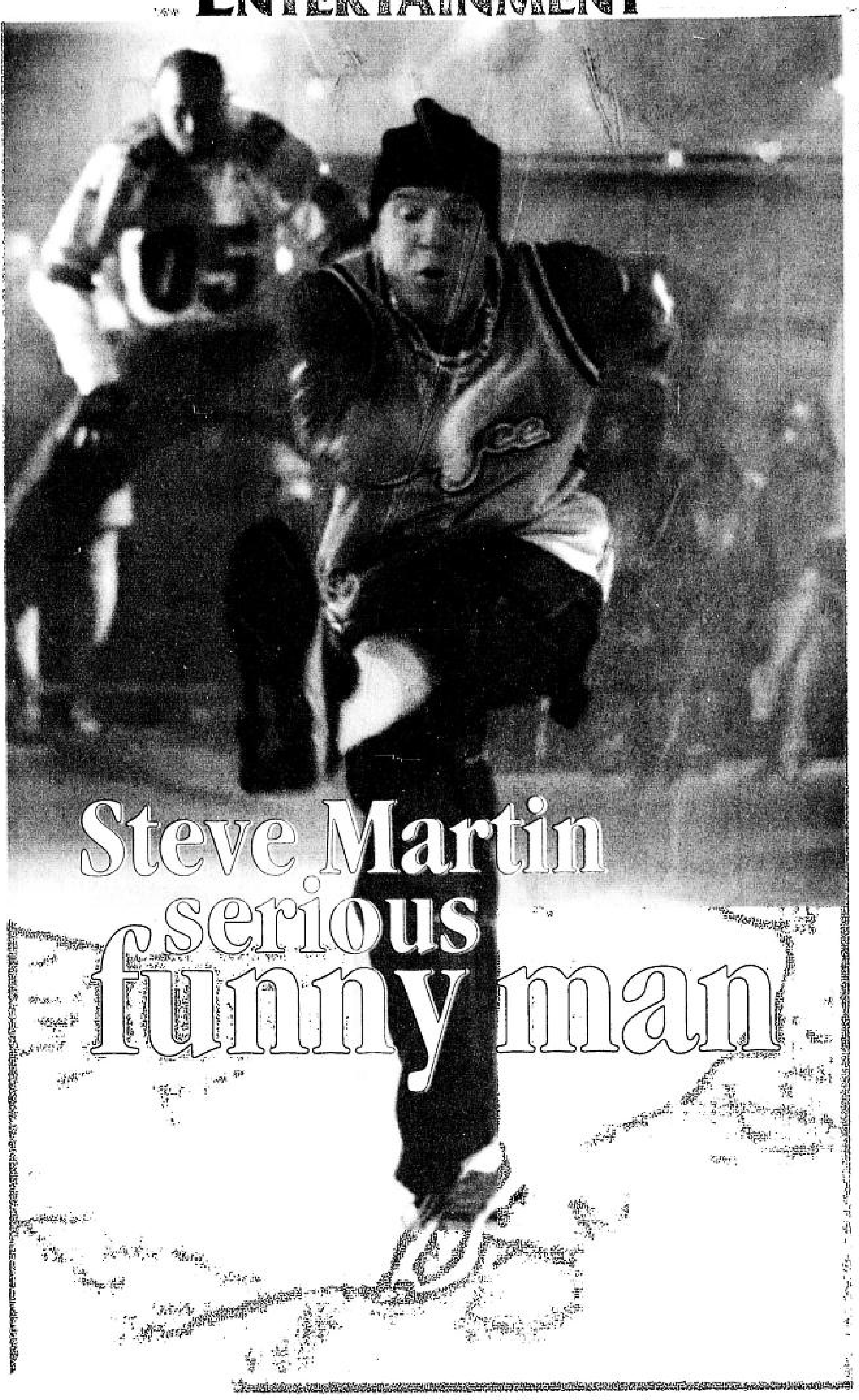
Alma and Joey separated last year after 12 years of marriage. They have four children—Yeoj, Win-Win, VJ and Em-Em.

Alma said she has tapped Parañaque Councilor Gene Puzon to run as her vice mayor.

She has also chosen her candidates for councilors: Barangay Captain Bert Guev erra, Juvy Colico, Mon Panaligan and Arnold Castillo in District 2, and And Pabalan and Jun Romey in District 1.

The rest in the lineup will be filled up later, she said.

Steve Martin serious funny man



STRAIGHT TRIPPIN'. Martin break-dancing in the recent hit 'Bringing Down the House.'

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
Contributor

LOS ANGELES—Don't expect to roll down the aisle and get a tummy ache from laughing non-stop when you meet silver-haired funnyman Steve Martin in person.

The multi-awarded and multi-talented comedian, who staged a comeback as host of the Oscars Awards this year, is very serious in person.

Introspective, intelligent, dignified and soft-spoken, Martin, who starred in the recent blockbuster comedy hit "Bringing Down the House," does not give you a one-man comedy act and does not deliver those witty punchlines that he is famous for.

He admits, "I don't know what people think or expect from me when they meet me for the first time. I never really think about it. I am what I am. I am not performing and the people I know or are close to are not looking for a 10-minute comedy show when they see me. We just socialize."

Dressed in a cool pastel green shirt with black slacks, a Swatch watch and a pair of black loafers, Martin is calm and collected as he talks to us one afternoon at a Beverly Hills hotel. He faces us with a serious demeanor that we have not been prepared for.

The night before, we watched his hit movie co-starring Oscar nominee (for "Chicago") singer-actress-producer Queen Latifah, and we couldn't keep ourselves from laughing over his witty one-liners and physical comedy gags.

Martin, as Peter Sanderson, played a straight-laced divorced lawyer who has an online fling with Latifah as Charlene, also known as "lawyer girl" on the Internet. Thinking that Charlene is a blonde, brainy, legal bombshell, Sanderson sets a blind date with her, only to find out that the witty "lawyer girl" online friend is a black prison escapee who is looking for a lawyer to prove her innocence.

Ultimate test

Directed by Adam Shankman ("The Wedding Planner") and distributed by Buena Vista Pictures, "Bringing Down the House" opened impressively with $31.7 million. After six weeks, the movie has already earned more than $117.7 million at the box-office and is still going strong.

Memorable to us were the scenes in which Martin tried to blend with the hip-hop crowd by donning a beanie, "gangsta" attire and trying to act like one of the brothers from the 'hood. He did exaggerated movements like slouching, walking side to side and bending his shoulders one at a time while mouthing some street smart slang and doing some hip sign language.

The ultimate test was when he was thrown onto the dance floor in a high-energy dance duel with the hip-hoppers and he was forced to do some break dancing.

What does he think he would do if one day, he woke up and found himself turned into a black dude?

"I don't know," Martin states. "Probably my dad would know what to do."

No culture clash

Did Queen Latifah, with whom he worked for the first time, give him any tips on how to act like a "brother"?

"Oh yes," he replies, "Queen Latifah was very helpful. She updated all the language, all the slang. She gave us good lingo to say like the classic 'You got me straight-trippin.' I still don't know what it means. She's great to be around obviously."

Was there a culture clash between the two of them?

"No," he quickly says, "we were very friendly. Our cultures are definitely different. She had five people on the set and I had none (laughs). But we got along great."

Did they get together after filming for the day? Had dinners sometimes?

"We did have early dinners to meet each other," he notes, but adds, "But after a long, long day of acting and after all that, all you think about is going home and getting to bed and getting ready for the next day. So there's no way to spend more time together unless if we were on an out-of-town location. And this was just shot in nearby Pasadena, California."

Laughter as reward

Did he do a lot of improvisation in this movie?

"Oh yes I did," he points out, "because the director allows it. There were a lot of things in the movie that were ad-libbed. And if it was funny, we kept it. I always think it's magic. Most directors would cut it out. But Adam (Shankman) kept things in the film. When something quirky and spontaneous happens, he knows there is really something magical there."

How does Martin know when he is being funny?

"I don't. It just happens. The reward comes later when you put it in front of an audience. Their laughter is your reward."

"Just like that kooky little scene in the movie when I was going to call the police and report Charlene's presence in my house. I picked up the phone, Charlene threatened me, and then suddenly I found myself speaking in Chinese or my version of it."

"That just came out. Then when I saw it on film, I thought it was very funny. But when I was doing it, I thought it wasn't funny at all."

When was the first time he realized that he could be funny?

"Well, it's not about when I realized I could be funny. It was more when I realized I loved to do comedy," he stresses. "I wanted to be a comedian. I wanted to do funny things."

He recalls, "I started as a magician. Oh, they loved my magic acts but then I realized that when the tricks don't work, my comedy routine works. And so pretty soon, I did comedy, too."

Is there something he wouldn't joke about?

"Sure," he quickly replies. "It's hard to tell what it is because with life, you develop more empathy for people and I probably wouldn't do today the things I did 20 years ago. It's in the individual. It's in the moment."

New novel

Does he ever test his materials on others?

"Yes I do," he admits. "I would run it by friends or sneak it in conversations once in a while and try to see the reaction from a friend."

Martin shares that as a comedian, "I like to do physical stuff. I like to do silly things. Acting is social and physical while writing is solitary and internal."

Martin, who has written the best selling book "Pure Drivel," a

collection of witty short stories, and his first novella, "Shop Girl," which was in the best seller lists of both the New York Times and Los Angeles Times, admits, "I would rather be nominated for best screenplay than for a good performance. Writing, for me, represents a huge challenge because I started at zero and to gain recognition for it is something really important to me."

He is currently planning to write his second book, which will be called "The Pleasure of My Company," for Hyperion.

Quirky people

Where does he get his material for writing?

"I live life and I see enough," he declares. "There are a lot of quirky people in my world. I don't need to stray too far."

An actor, a writer, a producer, a TV host, and a two-time Grammy Award winner for his two comedy albums, "Let's Get Small" and "A Wild and Crazy Guy," Martin also has a gold record with his hit single "King Tut."

"That was a fluke," he says, laughing. "I wasn't expecting it. But it's always nice to see this Best Country Instrumentalist award together with my acting and writing awards."

Since he has tried almost everything, what other challenges does he see himself doing in the future?

"I really don't see them as challenges but just the things I do," he clarifies. "I want to write more and just continue what I'm doing."

Fulfilling a vision

Martin explains that "when you start writing, you are surprised by what you know. In addition, you realize what you know about yourself, about people, and the things you remember.

"You will be surprised about the things that people have said to you and what you have remembered. Things that have stuck in your mind for 15 years.

"It's almost like you are trying to fulfill a vision or an ideal that you are trying to reach. Writing is more about listening to what is coming out."

When you have read what you have written, do you feel like you have disclosed much about yourself that you don't want the public to know or you want to share?

He replies, "You know when you're writing fiction, it doesn't matter what is coming out or what is revealed. It is hidden in characters and people and somehow it seems worth it. Whereas on an interview in 'Entertainment Tonight,' now that's different!"

'BROTHER' Martin says Queen Latifah helped her a lot. With them is co-star Eugene Levy.

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1 THE HOURS
2 (DOLBY) HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
3 (DTS) THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 ANGEL SA LUPA

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 TILL THERE WAS YOU
3 (DOLBY) X- MEN -2
4

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729
1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 NATIONAL SECURITY
3 (DOLBY) A MAN APART
4 (DTS) THE MATRIX RELOADED

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305
1 (DOLBY) THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 (DTS) A MAN APART
3 WALANG KAPALIT

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) RESERVE
2 HIRAM
3 (DTS) EBA LASON KAY ADAN
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 (DTS) THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 HIRAM
5 X-MEN 2

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 HIRAM

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
3 HIRAM

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 NATIONAL SECURITY
2 KANGAROO JACK
3 (DTS) WALANG KAPALIT
4 (DOLBY) THE MATRIX RELOADED

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808
1 (DTS)
2 (DTS)

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 KIKAY
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 PHONE BOOTH
3 ANGER MANAGEMENT
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

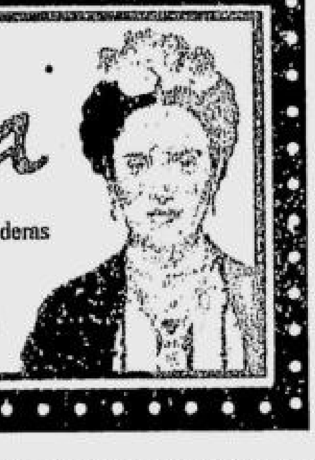
Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03
1 (DOLBY) HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 (DTS ES) THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) te (045) 887-0121
1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
3 (DOLBY) BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE
4 (DTS) THE MATRIX RELOADED

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72



Frida
Salma Hayek Antonio Banderas
OPENS ON MAY 28

SM CINEMA
SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868
1 DAYO
2 ANGHEL SA LUPA
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 HOW TO LOSE A GUY ...
5 THE MATRIX RELOADED
6 WALANG KAPALIT
7 HIRAM
8 X-MEN 2

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 • 7161416
1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 SO CLOSE
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 DAYO
5 THE MATRIX RELOADED
6 HIRAM
7 X-MEN 2
8 ANGHEL SA LUPA
9 HOW TO LOSE A GUY...
10 RING 0

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749
1 ANGHEL SA LUPA
2 SO CLOSE
3 JOHNNY ENGLISH
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED
5 X-MEN 2
6 WALANG KAPALIT
7 THE MATRIX RELOADED
8 HOW TO LOSE A GUY...
9 TILL THERE WAS YOU
10 HIRAM
11 RING 0
12 DAYO

SM CITY MANILA
5239240
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 HOW TO LOSE A GUY...
3 RING 0
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED
5 SO CLOSE
6 THE MATRIX RELOADED
7 HIRAM
8 DAYO
9 WALANG KAPALIT
10 TILL THERE WAS YOU
11 X-MEN 2
12 ANGHEL SA LUPA

SM MEGAMALL
6331001 • 6329401
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 X-MEN 2
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 HOW TO LOSE A GUY...
5 RING 0
6 SO CLOSE
7 DAYO
8 TILL THERE WAS YOU
9 WALANG KAPALIT
10 THE MATRIX RELOADED
11 HIRAM
12 ANGHEL SA LUPA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9285452
1 X-MEN 2
2 THE MATRIX RELOADED
3 RING 0
4 WALANG KAPALIT
5 DAYO
6 SO CLOSE
7 HOW TO LOSE A GUY...
8 THE MATRIX RELOADED

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888
1 RING 0
2 SO CLOSE
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 HOW TO LOSE A GUY ...
5 DAYO
6 X-MEN 2
7 ANGHEL SA LUPA
8 THE MATRIX RELOADED
9 WALANG KAPALIT
10 HIRAM

SM CITY CEBU
2313876
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 PUNLA
3 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE
4 PINOCCHIO
5 SOULKEEPER
6 HOW TO LOSE A GUY ...
7 WALANG KAPALIT
8 THE MATRIX RELOADED

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422
1 WISHMASTER 4
2 CLOSED
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 WALANG KAPALIT
5 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE
6 X-MEN 2
7 CLOSED
8 AMAZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 CONFESSION OF A...
3 HOW TO LOSE A GUY...
4 DAYO
5 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE
6 WALANG KAPALIT

SM SUPER CTR, SUCAT
8294975
1 DAYO
2 HOW TO LOSE A GUY ...
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 WALANG KAPALIT

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 HIRAM
4 DAYO

SM CITY DAVAO
2976908
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 AMAZON
3 PINOCCHIO
4 WALANG KAPALIT
5 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE
6 THE MATRIX RELOADED

SM BICUTAN
776-3055
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 DAYO
3 WALANG KAPALIT
4 HOW TO LOSE A GUY...

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 JAILBIRDS
3 WALANG KAPALIT
4 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City
633-0976

HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
11:00 FS/11:20 MF/1:40/4:00/
10:35 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:55 END

THE MATRIX RELOADED
11:10 FS/11:40 MF/2:30/5:20/
10:35 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:25 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 • Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate : P120.00 • After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD
CINEMAS
@ Robinsons Malls
call-a-movie: 536- 7812
NOW SHOWING

Galleria
632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279
THX MATRIX RELOADED 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00 LMF
2 MATRIX RELOADED
3 MATRIX RELOADED
4 SO CLOSE
5 HOW TO LOOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
6 RING - 0
7 WALANG KAPALIT
8 ANGEL SA LUPA
9 BRINGGING DOWN THE HOUSE
10 X-MEN 2

MATINEE PRICE: P90 THX cinema / P75 level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita
536 -7809- 12
1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 SO CLOSE
3 DAYO
4 RING - 0
5 WALANG KAPALIT
6 HOW TO LOOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
7 MATRIX RELOADED

Metro East - Marcos hway
682- 8193 / 8280
1 RING -O
2 MATRIX RELOADED
3 ANGEL SA LUPA
4 HOW TO LOOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
5 WALANG KAPALIT
6 DAYO
7 MATRIX RELOADED
8 SO CLOSE

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30
1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 TILL THERE WAS YOU
3 WALANG KAPALIT
4 X-MEN 2
5 HOW TO LOOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
6 MATRIX RELOADED
7 RING - 0
8 ANGEL SA LUPA

Malabon Citisquare
288-0985 / 288-2575
1 DAYO
2 MATRIX RELOADED
3 WALANG KAPALIT
4 HIRAM

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp.
(045)875-1927
(045)961-5270
1 BRINGGING DOWN THE HOUSE
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 CONFESSIONS OF DANGEROUS MIND
4 DAYO
5 MATRIX RELOADED
6 HOW TO LOOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS

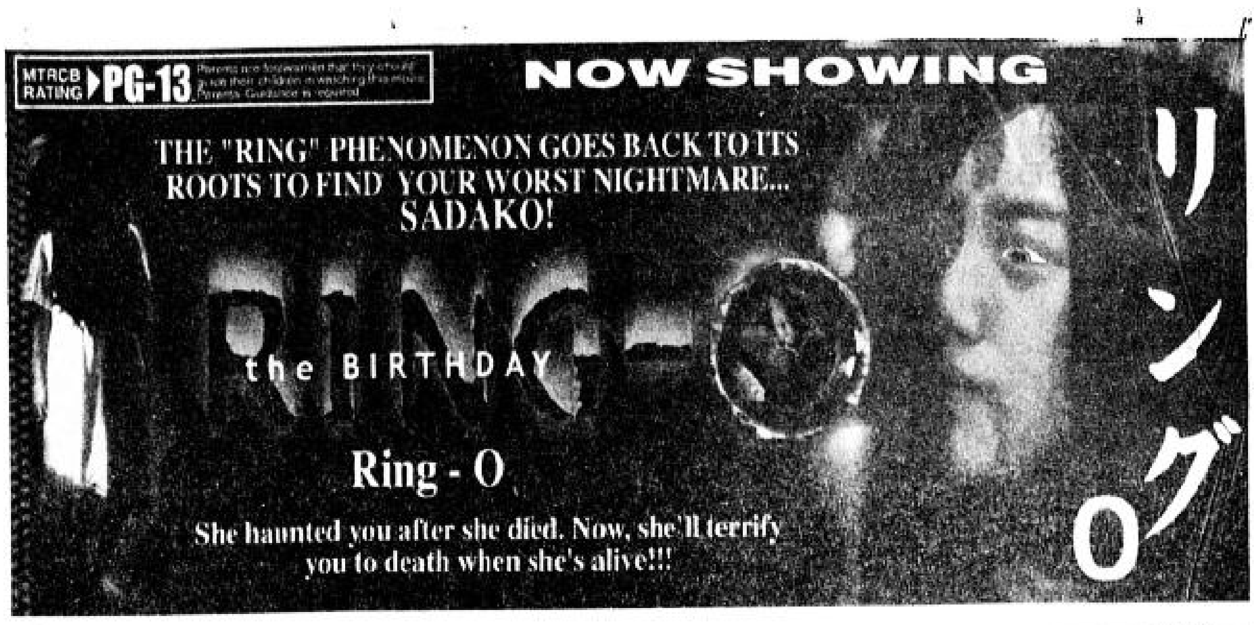
Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838
1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 HIRAM
3 ANGEL SA LUPA
4 HOW TO LOOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
5 WALANG KAPALIT
6 DAYO

Sta. Rosa Laguna
(049)837-0907
1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 HIRAM
3 ANGEL SA LUPA
4 WALANG KAPALIT
5 CONFESSIONS OF A DANGEROUS MIND

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459
1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 RING - 0
3 BRINGGING DOWN THE HOUSE
4 JAIL BIRDS
5 WISH MASTER
6 WALANG KAPALIT

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78
1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 BRINGGING DOWN THE HOUSE
3 AMAZON
4 WISH MASTER
5 WALANG KAPALIT
6 X-MEN 2

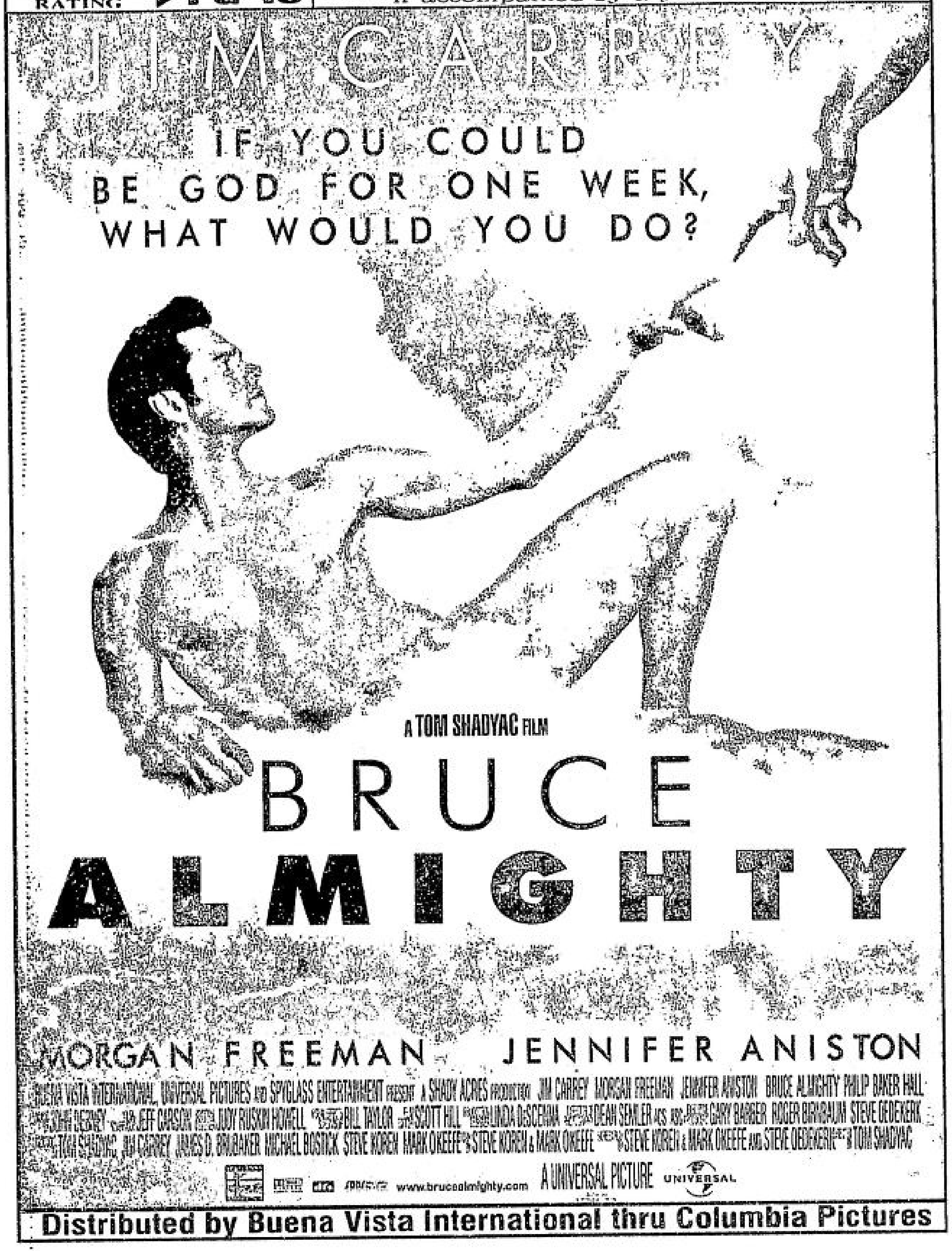
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.


MTRCB RATING PG-13
NOW SHOWING
THE "RING" PHENOMENON GOES BACK TO ITS ROOTS TO FIND YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE... SADAKO!
RING-O
the BIRTHDAY
Ring - O
She haunted you after she died. Now, she'll terrify you to death when she's alive!!!
リング
0

BRUCE RULES THE WORLD!

THE COMEDY EVENT OF THE YEAR OPENS MAY 28!

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult


JIM CARREY
IF YOU COULD BE GOD FOR ONE WEEK, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?
A TOM SHADYAC FILM
BRUCE ALMIGHTY
MORGAN FREEMAN JENNIFER ANISTON
BUENA VISTA INTERNATIONAL, UNIVERSAL PICTURES AND SPYGLASS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENT A SHADY ACRES PRODUCTION JIM CARREY MORGAN FREEMAN JENNIFER ANISTON BRUCE ALMIGHTY PHILIP BAKER HALL
JOHN DEBNEY JEFF CARSON JUDY RUSKIN HOWELL BILL TAYLOR SCOTT HILL LINDA DeSCENNA DEAN SEMLER ACS GARY BARBER ROGER BIRNBAUM STEVE OEDEKERK
TOM SHADYAC JIM CARREY JAMES D. BRUBAKER MICHAEL BOSTICK STEVE KOREN MARK O'KEEFE STEVE KOREN & MARK O'KEEFE STEVE KOREN & MARK O'KEEFE AND STEVE OEDEKERK TOM SHADYAC
www.brucealmighty.com
A UNIVERSAL PICTURE
UNIVERSAL

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

OPENS MAY 28

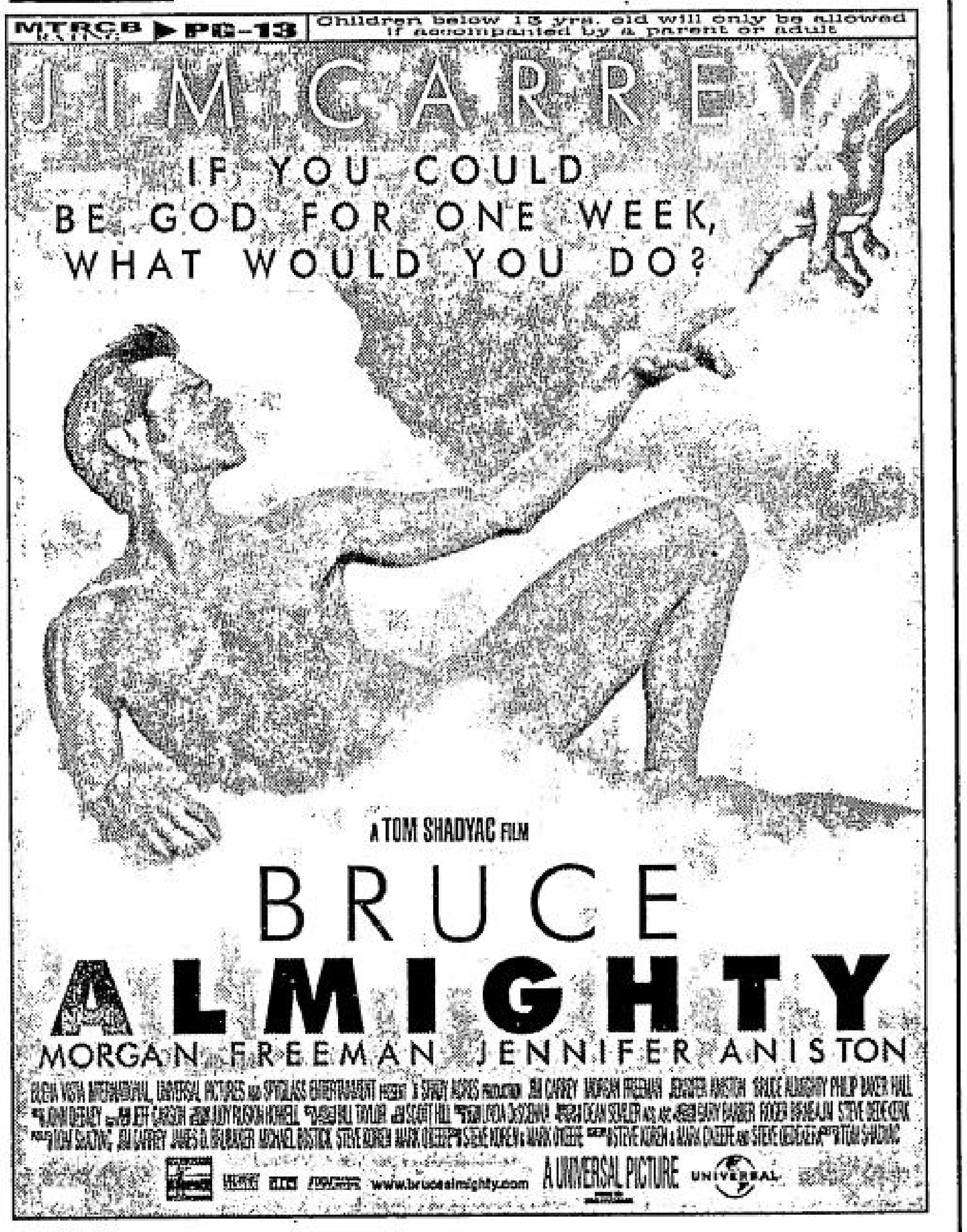
FERNANDO POE, JR.
EFREN "BATA" REYES
CANDY PANGILINAN JANUARY ISAAC
TONI GONZAGA and OYO BOY SOTTO
PAKNERS
STORY: R. REYES SCREENPLAY: MANNY R. BUISING, ELY MATAWARAN
CINEMATOGRAPHY: SERGIO LOBO MUSIC: JAIME FABREGAS
DIRECTED BY: TONY Y. REYES DGPI
AN FPJ PRODUCTIONS PRESENTATION

Gala Premieres today at SM Megamall Cinema 9 & 10 7:30 p.m. and May 27 (Tuesday) at Jade Cinema Angeles, Pampanga 7:30 p.m.

LOVE RADIO 90.7 in cooperation with BUENA VISTA INTERNATIONAL

INVITE YOU TO SEE

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult


JIM CARREY
IF YOU COULD BE GOD FOR ONE WEEK, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?
A TOM SHADYAC FILM
BRUCE ALMIGHTY
MORGAN FREEMAN JENNIFER ANISTON
www.brucealmighty.com
A UNIVERSAL PICTURE
UNIVERSAL

SM CINEMA

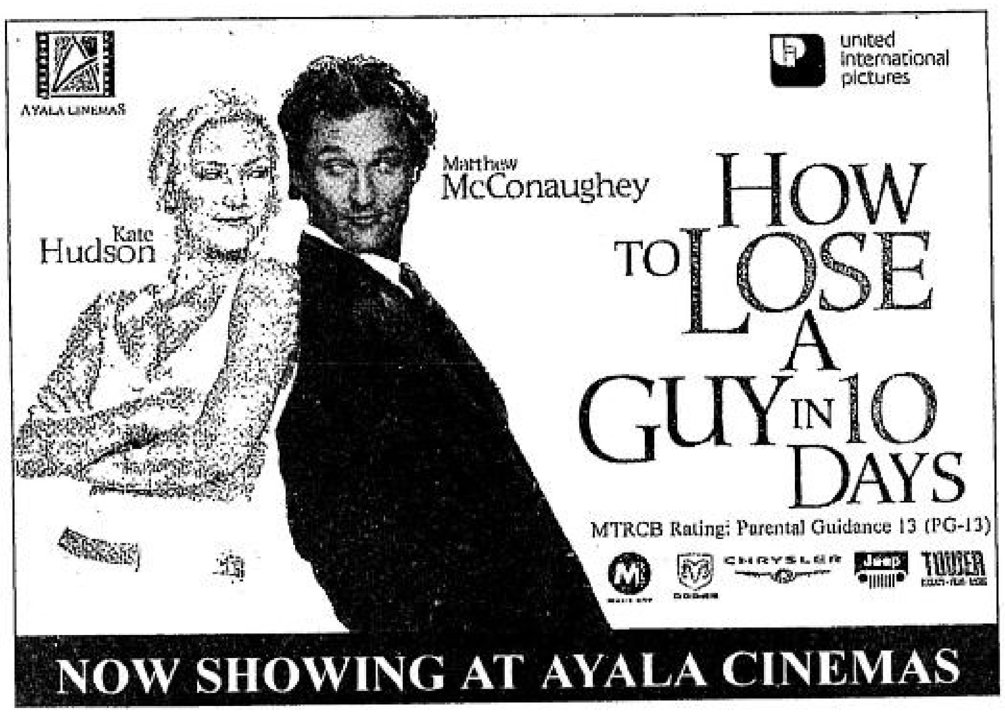
Megamall • Cinema 6

May 26 (Monday) 7:30 PM

OPENS MAY 28 AT THEATERS EVERYWHERE

Sponsored by:

STI Make it happen!
Basketball Jackpot
New Pagcor Philweb
Nissin's Yakisoba


AYALA CINEMAS
united international pictures
Kate Hudson
Matthew McConaughey
HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)
CHRYSLER
Jeep

NOW SHOWING AT AYALA CINEMAS

MTRCB ▶ R-13

Strictly for 13 years of age and up

Looks can be deceiving.
莫文蔚 舒淇 趙薇
KAREN MOK SHU QI ZHAO WEI
夕陽天使
so close
www.so-close.com

Sexy Asian angels display amazing martial arts techniques in 'So Close'

Lynn (Shu Qi) and Sue (Zhao Wei) are sexy and beautiful sisters whose parents were brutally killed by powerful underworld figures. Disillusioned with the law and armed with amazing computer and kung fu skills (not to mention an enviable fashion style), the seductive sisters become professional assassins, killing criminals for other criminals.

Gutsy and brilliant female cop Yat Hong (Karen Mok) relentlessly pursue the sisters, who are in turn fascinated by their tough adversary.

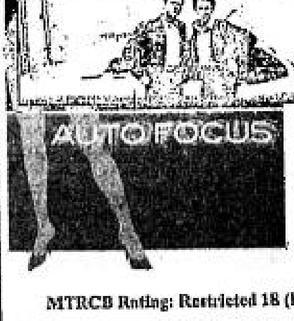
SO CLOSE, starring Asia's most alluring and talented young actresses, features the coolest, breath-taking martial arts sequences from world-renowned director Cory Yuen, Jet Li's martial arts choreographer in THE ONE, KISS OF THE DRAGON and ROMEO MUST DIE. Don't miss it!

NOW SHOWING

AYALA CINEMAS

NOW SHOWING AT Greenbelt: ArtFilm

DARING, AWARD-WINNING, EXTRAORDINARY


"BRILLIANT!"
AUTO FOCUS

AUTO FOCUS

GREG KINNEAR & WILLEM DAFOE

A peek into the secret life of Hollywood celebrity known to audiences as the star of 1960s TV series Hogan's Heroes, Bob Crane. But behind the loving wife (RITA WILSON), the successful comedic career & the public adoration lies an obsession for the forbidden. Auto Focus chronicles Bob Crane's downward spiral into erotic addiction - from his promiscuous lifestyle & unconventional hobbies to his mysterious death.

Auto Focus creates an absorbing portrait of a man whose carnal hunger brought about his eventual down fall as an actor, a father & a man.

"TWO THUMBS UP, WAY UP!"
— Ebert & Roeper

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R-18)

NOKIA   INQUIRER

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Pleasingly diverse lineup of films

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE HALLMARK Channel is bursting out all over with movies this June, as the family channel screens films starring the talented and popular likes of **Michael J. Fox, Susan Sarandon, Nick Nolte, Richard Thomas** and **Jimmy Smits**. Their starrers will be screened at 9 p.m., on Hallmark's "Movie premieres."

"The Abduction" leads off on June 1, with **Victoria Principal** playing a woman who's constantly stalked by her estranged husband.

On June 8, Michael J. Fox topbills the blockbuster comedy, "The Secret of My Success." The rags-to-riches tale follows the rise of Fox's character, Brantley Foster, up the corporate ladder of success.

In "The Broken Cord" (June 14), **Jimmy Smits** plays Dartmouth professor David Norwell, who takes on the challenge of single parenthood in a unique way" he adopts an underdeveloped four-year-old Native American boy who soon shows signs of mental disability.

Norwell soon discovers that the boy's mother was an alcoholic and that his symptoms are the result of irreversible brain damage.

"Gleason (June 15) introduces young viewers to Jackie Gleason, one of US TV's star comedians in the '60s. Emmy-wining comic **Brad Garrett** (of "Everybody Loves Raymond") pays tribute to the TV pioneer who created "The Honeymooners." The biopic paints an honest portraits of the late great TV star.

"Lorenzo's Oil" (June 22) is based on a true story. It depicts the determination and quiet heroism of parents who successfully find a cure for the mysterious ailment of their five-year-old son. Susan Sarandon and Nick Nolte portray the amazing protagonists of this moving tale of parental love and devotion.

"Death in Small Doses" (June 27) is a story of mystery and intrigue. A woman dies from poisoning and her former husband is suspected of committing the crime. An investigator tries to find out the truth and, in the process, he uncovers many secret involving different members of the family. Emmy winner **Richard Thomas** (of "The Waltons") stars.

On June 28, the film on view is "The Crooked E: The Unshreeded Truth About Enron." The production seeks to be beyond the headlines, right into the heart of a scandal that rocked the American business community to its core some years ago.

This timely movie is based on the book written by **Brian Curver**, an Enron employee whose dreams were destroyed when the company went bankrupt. Lead roles are played by **Christian Kane, Shannon Elizabeth** and **Brian Dennehy**.

Finally, on June 29, "Stealing Sinatra" shows what happens when three inept kidnappers conspire to hold **Frank Sinatra**'s son for ransom. This comic caper stars **David Arquette, William H. Macy, Ryan Browning** and **Thomas Ian Nicholas**.

This is a pleasingly diverse lineup of films, some of which have not yet been seen here, either on TV or the big screen. Personally, we're particularly interested in viewing "The Broken Cord," "Gleason," "The Crooked E" and "Stealing Sinatra."

Last Big Hit?

A LOT has been said about the end of the decade-long run of **Cameron Mackintosh**'s production of "Miss Saigon," which has helped a number of Filipino musical talents break into the international theater scene.

Ironically, however, "Miss Saigon" is Mackintosh's last big hit, after his earlier triumphs like "Les Miserables."

After "Miss Saigon" hit it big, first on the London stage and then on Broadway in New York City, Mackintosh did produce other promising shows but they failed to click with theatergoers.

One of them was the musical version of "Martin Guerre," and we hear that there was another musical about, Jonah and the whale(!). Unfortunately, both productions failed to survive for the long haul.

A third show, about black funky musicians, did better, but it was a small production and thus didn't make major waves on global theater scene.

Filipinos who've worked in Mackintosh's productions are sad that his lucky streak appears to have diminished. From their reports we get a good impression of him, both as a producer and as a person. Well, he's become incredibly wealthy form his past hits, so he still has more than enough capital left over to finance his next theater blockbuster, once he gets his hands on really solid material- for a change!

SHOW TOPPE
MARE
Caring for the Poor

HAPPY FAMILY

Sen. Loi Ejercito and her son, former San Juan mayor Jinggoy Estrada, sing while Jinggoy's wife Precy beams in the background during the national assembly of the senator's Mare Foundation at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City on Saturday. During the program, hosted by comedian Giselle Sanchez, one speaker called the senator's husband, former President Joseph Estrada, "the new Andres Bonifacio."

JOE ARAZAS

'Game Channel Challenge' today

TV's first and only Game Jock Iya, with commercial model Dustin Reyes, host the first "Game Channel Challenge," 5 to 8 p.m. today at the ground floor of SM Megamall Building A. Featured performers are Jeffrey Hidalgo and the Chronic Band.

The challenge is open to all Globe and Touch Mobile subscribers. Mobile phones and "Game Channel" merchandise will be given away to the winners.

"Game Channel" is the interactive show that enables viewers to play any of their six exciting games like "Trivia Text," "Cross Text," "Search Text," "Bumper Cars," "Alien Wars" and "Katapult." It airs Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6 to 7 p.m. on IBC 13.

GAME Jock Iya

DID YOU KNOW...

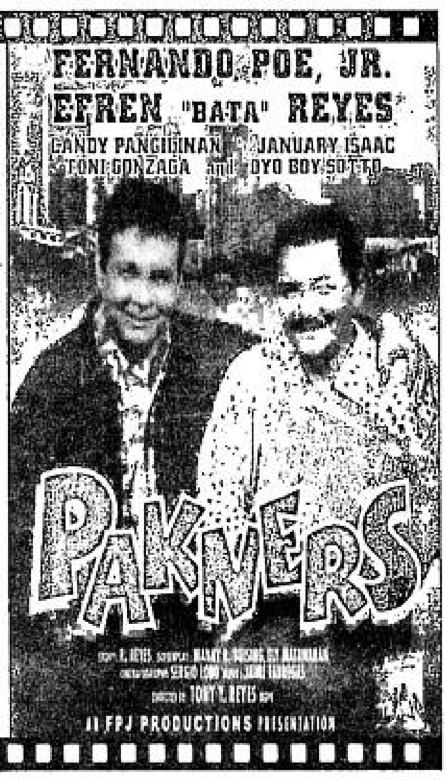
TV personalities **Julius Babao** and **Tin-Tin Bersola** were seen strolling hand in hand at Glorietta 4 one recent Sunday afternoon. They were seen entering a carpet store and picking out Persian rugs. Shopping for furnishings for their soon-to-be conjugal home?

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

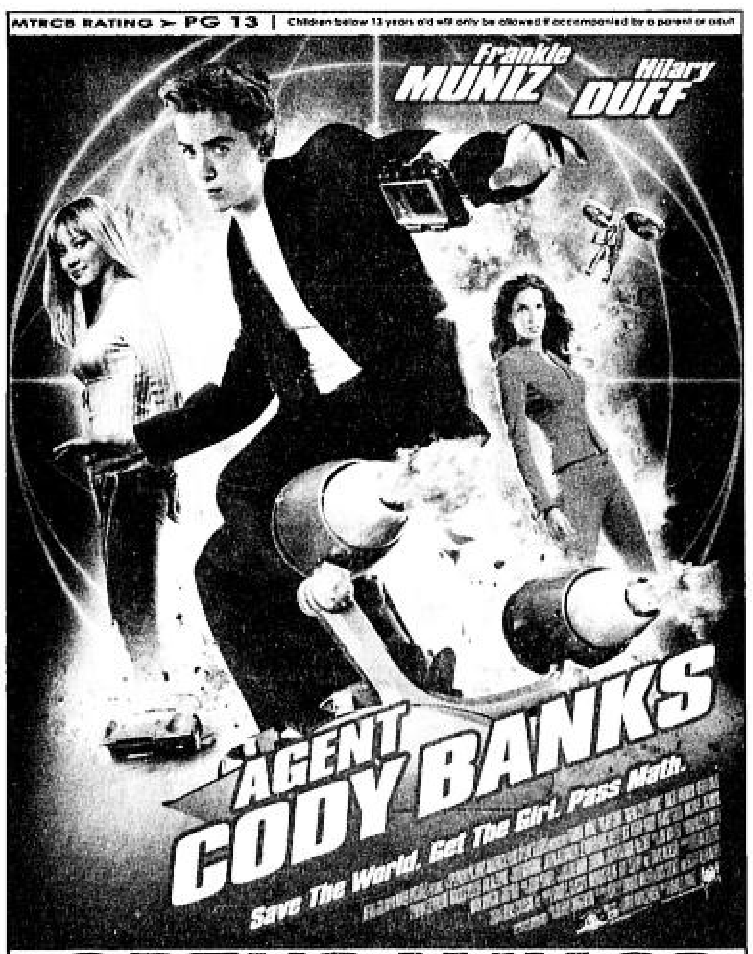
SO CLOSE R13 12:25,2:45,5:05, 7:25,9:45	MATRIX: RELOADED R13 12:40,3:35, 6:30,9:25	HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS P13 11:55,2:25,4:55,7:25,9:55
MATRIX: RELOADED R13 1:35,4:30, 7:25,10:20	MATRIX: RELOADED R13 11:45,2:40, 5:35,8:30	HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS P13 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

SEE IT FIRST!
SM CINEMA
RED CARPET PREMIERE
Invitational
Snack Studio Inc. Premiere
on May 26, 2003
7:30 pm
SM MEGAMALL
CINEMA 9 & 10
MTRCB RATING: GP
Regular showing on May 28, 2003
at the SM CINEMAS
Simultaneously shown at
SM Pampanga • Cebu • Davao

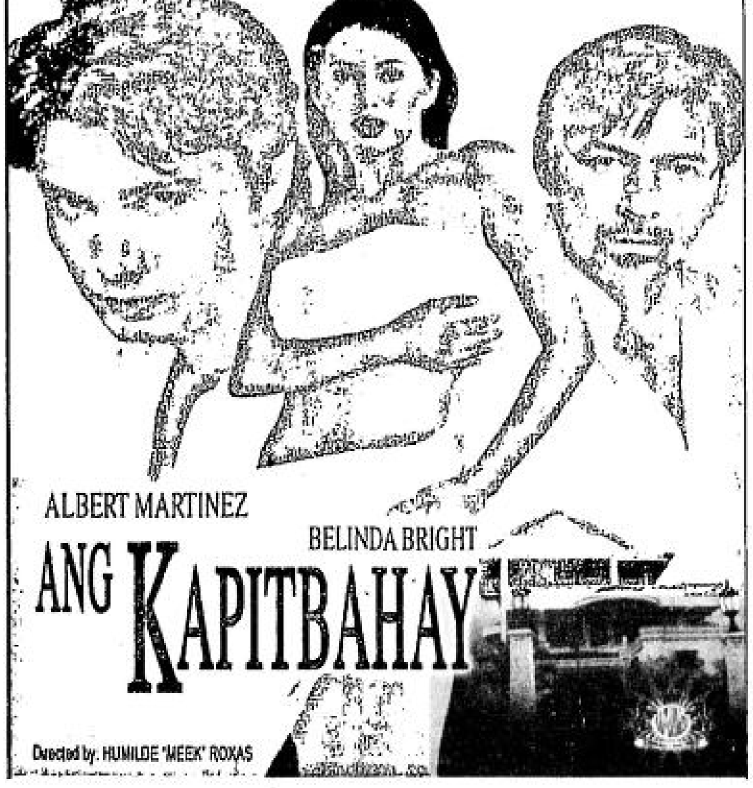


MTRCB RATING > PG 13 | Children below 13 years old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult



OPENS MAY 28

OPENS WEDNESDAY, MAY 28!
MTRCB RATING ▶ R RESTRICTED | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.
APPROVED WITHOUT CUTS BY THE MTRCB
Imus Productions, Inc. proudly presents
JOEL TORRE DARIA RAMIREZ SOFIA VALDEZ MICHELLE ESTEVEZ



Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	ANGHEL SA LUPA
Ali 2	DAYO
Ali 3	SO CLOSE
Ali 4	MATRIX RELOADED
Ali 5	MATRIX RELOADED
Ali 6	WALANG KAPALIT
Ali 7	HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS

ARANETA COLISEUM	
MAY 25	PBA GAMES
MAY 26 & 28	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
MAY 31	PBA FANS DAY
JUNE 14	MARTIN & REGINE CONCERT
JUNE 16 18 20	WORLD SLASHER CUP

ELEPHANT WORLD
ELEPHANT SHOW
REOPENING SOON!
FUN RIDES
TAGADISCO • VIKING SHIP
START 4PM (DAILY)

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	HIRAM
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	HIRAM
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	DAYO
B	HIRAM
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DAYO
CINEMA-2	ANGHEL SA LUPA
CINEMA-3	HIRAM
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	X-MEN 2
CINEMA-6	KIKAY
CINEMA-7	TILL THERE WAS YOU
CINEMA-8	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SO CLOSE
CINEMA-12	HOW TO LOSE A GUY
CINEMA-14	RINGO
CINEMA-15	WALANG KAPALIT
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	WALANG KAPALIT
CINEMA 2	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA 3	FINAL DESTINATION 2
CINEMA 4	NATIONAL SECURITY
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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WHO IS
CLETIS TOUT?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Raymond survives short marriage, life with guns, goons, gold

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

RAYMOND Bagatsing admits he always falls out of love.

The breakup of his eight-month-old marriage to actress **Lara Fabregas** may have surprised his fans, show biz associates and even those who are close to him, but he might have seen it coming.

"I'm not a saint," says Raymond. "Lara and I lacked understanding. No third party was involved in our breakup. There's no chance of reconciling with her now."

Lara has decided to leave for London to pursue a theater career there. Raymond says he is aware of her decision. He has gone out on dates after the breakup, but he is far from plunging into another serious romance.

"All my life, I've been longing for somebody to love me because I grew up without a solid image of love," Raymond allows. "I didn't know if I could survive without a girlfriend because I was too clingy. But now I'm sure I can be alone.

"If I have to spend life alone, I'm willing to face that. I no longer want to rely on anybody for my growth. I was miserable when I was married because. I couldn't make it work."

In the process of searching for himself, Raymond has changed his religious beliefs. Born Catholic, he became a Born-Again Christian but later took up Buddhism.

He has joined Ananda Marga and he insists the Eastern philosophy of meditation has cleansed him and helped take away the pain in his heart.

He does yoga daily and fasts twice a month, taking no food and water at all for the day.

"People had to hurt me in order for me to find myself, or I wouldn't be here now," he says. "I used to be really aloof, troubled and confused, especially during my formative years. I drank a lot. But the past few years, I came out of my shell. The people I met were responsible for who I am now."

"I realized there's always a reason for everything and things don't always happen the way you want them. But my obsession is still to find myself."

Raymond wanted to become an action star like **Fernando Poe Jr.** or **Lito Lapid**, who were his idols. Instead, he became a a dramatic actor.

"I had so much angst when I was growing up," he shares. "When I was 5, my parents separated, so I lived with my *lola* in Nueva Ecija. My only sister, **Shalimar**, lived with my mom in Melbourne. My mom wanted to prove to my father she could do it on her own. She comes from a very poor family of farmers, but she's intelligent."

Coming from a political clan, Raymond grew up in the midst of armalites and bodyguards. His father **Boy** is a son of Manila Mayor **Ramon Bagatsing.**

"My family's story is guns, goons, gold and drama," Raymond offers. "At 7, I lived with my dad and my stepmom (the mother of his sister-actress **Monina Bagatsing**), but I couldn't stand her, so I left to live with my *lola* again."

"My mom would come home and visit, and when it was time for her to leave, I felt so much rage and pain. Until now, I still carry it in my heart."

He admits that as a child, he had been scheming, which is why he was able to move to the United States with a woman who was in love with his dad.

"When I got to the US, it was another story," he says. "*Napabayaan ako.* It was sad, but I didn't tell my dad. He is such a strong man and I didn't want to show him I was a weakling. I wrote my (maternal) *lola* and I was crying, but I told her I was okay."

When Raymond was 12, his mom eventually asked him to join her in Australia. At 14, the rebellious Raymond returned to Manila and lived with his dad again.

"I speak my mind out," he says. "That's why I often got into a rift with my dad. At one point, he put a gun to my head just to shut me up."

Today, Raymond the actor draws emotions from his life experiences. He considers the late **Dindo Fernando** as his biggest acting influence.

"I love being an actor," he asserts. "It's one of the best jobs in the world. I want to try different roles that require different emotions. The long hours are taxing, but the fulfillment more than makes up for all the hardships that go with the job."

"I look for myself in the characters I play and the movies that I watch. I believe my dad also influenced my acting because acting was his hobby."

He won all the best actor awards for his performance in **Lav Diaz**'s "Ang Kriminal sa Barrio Concepcion," finally finding his niche in show biz. Prior to that, he clinched an Urian best actor trophy for **Marilou Diaz-Abaya**'s "Milagros."

He also won the Famas and Urian best supporting actor for "Soltera," where he played the gay best friend of **Maricel Soriano.**

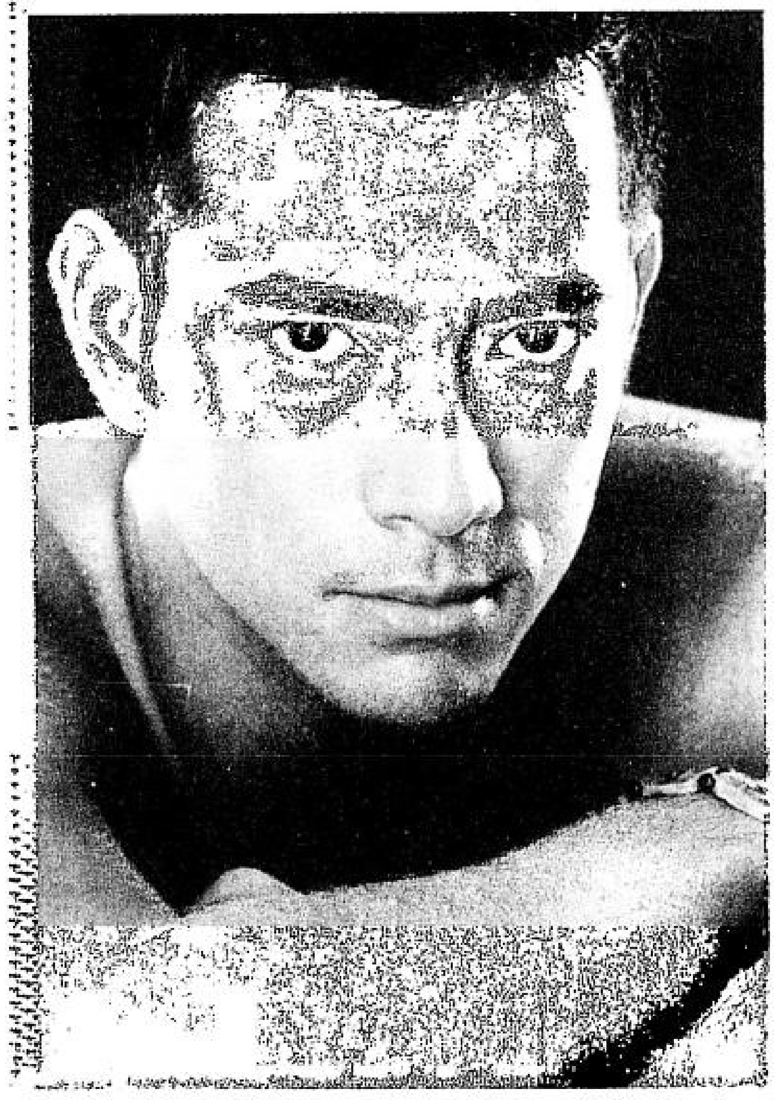
Raymond has just completed work in **Celso Ad Castillo**'s horror-drama, "Sanib," Regal's official entry in the Manila Film Festival. He plays a priest tasked to do an exorcism job on **Aubrey Miles.**

He is also in the **Jose Mari Avellana** movie, "Alab ng Lahi," another filmfest entry where he plays a soldier, with **Robin Padilla** in the lead.

On TV, Raymond is in the cast of GMA 7's soon-to-premiere soap series, "Narito Ako," with **Ariel Rivera**, **Dina Bonnevie** and **Jolina Magdangal.**

Raymond also wants to try directing.

"I always want to express myself," he says. "Without a means of expression, I'd burst."



NO SAINT. Raymond Bagatsing talks of pain from childhood to the more recent past.

Maui plays 'virgin'

SEXY actress **Maui Taylor** plays her most important and challenging role so far as Cion, a retardate in a sleepy seaside town who becomes pregnant while remaining a virgin, or so people think, in **Joel Lamangan**'s "Huling Birhen sa Lupa."

Maui says she watched movies like "I Am Sam" to get pointers on how mentally challenged people behave.

In "Huling Birhen sa Lupa," her character has the mind of a 12-year-old and is unable to understand much of what is going on around her.

"During the shooting, Direk Joel would tell me, 'You're supposed to act like a 12-year-old,'" she recalls. "He's a good motivator. He was able to make me cry in some scenes. It's hard to make me cry because I'm such a happy-go-lucky person in real life. But it took only one conversation with Direk Joel to help me get into character."

Her fans will expect Maui to have sexy scenes in "Huling Birhen sa Lupa," like she did in her previous movies like "Gamitan" and "Sex Drive." They will not be disappointed. One of the highlights of "Huling Birhen sa Lupa" is a rape scene, where Maui's character is abused by five men, which is actually why she becomes pregnant.

"That was a very difficult scene to shoot," recalls Maui. "I'm only 5'2 and all of the guys were bigger than I. One of them is Mike Magat who is more than six feet tall."

But Maui is very proud of "Huling Birhen sa Lupa," based on a screenplay by **Raquel Villavicencio.** Maui stars with **Ara Mina** and **Jay Manalo.**

The Viva Films production is one of the six official entries in the Manila Film Festival which starts June 11.

Jay plays Father Emman, the corrupt priest who fakes miracles to make money. Ara plays Maui's older sister who is also the town's whore and Father Emman's lover.

Maui and Ara had worked together on GMA 7's gag show, "Bubble Gang."

"Ara is also my brother's friend, so we're familiar with each other," Maui says.

TAYLOR-MADE. Maui's newest role is a first, in Joel Lamangan's "Huling Birhen sa Lupa."

Brains, more than beauty, get more points in Miss Makati search

By Marinel R. Cruz

BEAUTY is secondary to intelligence in the 2003 search for Miss Makati, according to Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay.

Unlike other beauty contests, the Miss Makati search will give more weight to intelligence, personality and character than physical features, Binay said in a news conference at the Makati City Park in Guadalupe last week when the 13 finalists were presented.

"The winner will serve as an ambassador of goodwill to encourage potential investors in the city, considered one of the country's business centers," said Binay.

"The winning candidate must be an intelligent and confident woman because she will be dealing with a lot of people during her one-year reign," Binay said.

The 2003 Miss Makati will be crowned on Tuesday, May 27, 7 p.m. at the ballroom of Mandarin Oriental Hotel on Makati Avenue.

Last year's winner, Jane Christine Supan, 20, said she was at her busiest last June, which is Makati month. She attended many of the mayor's functions, like fund-raisers, contests and courtesy calls by foreign ambassadors.

Supan is a broadcast communications major at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

One of this year's candidates, Diwata Evangelista, 18, was a classmate of Binibining Pilipinas candidate Ariane Garcia, who reportedly committed suicide Monday last week.

Evangelista said Garcia was one of her friends who encouraged her to join beauty contests. "She said I was tall, like her," she said of Garcia. "She said joining beauty contests would help me gain more confidence."

Candidate No. 7, Melissa Cruz, a University of Santo Tomas Tourism student, said she joined the contest for her mother, who herself dreamed of becoming a beauty queen.

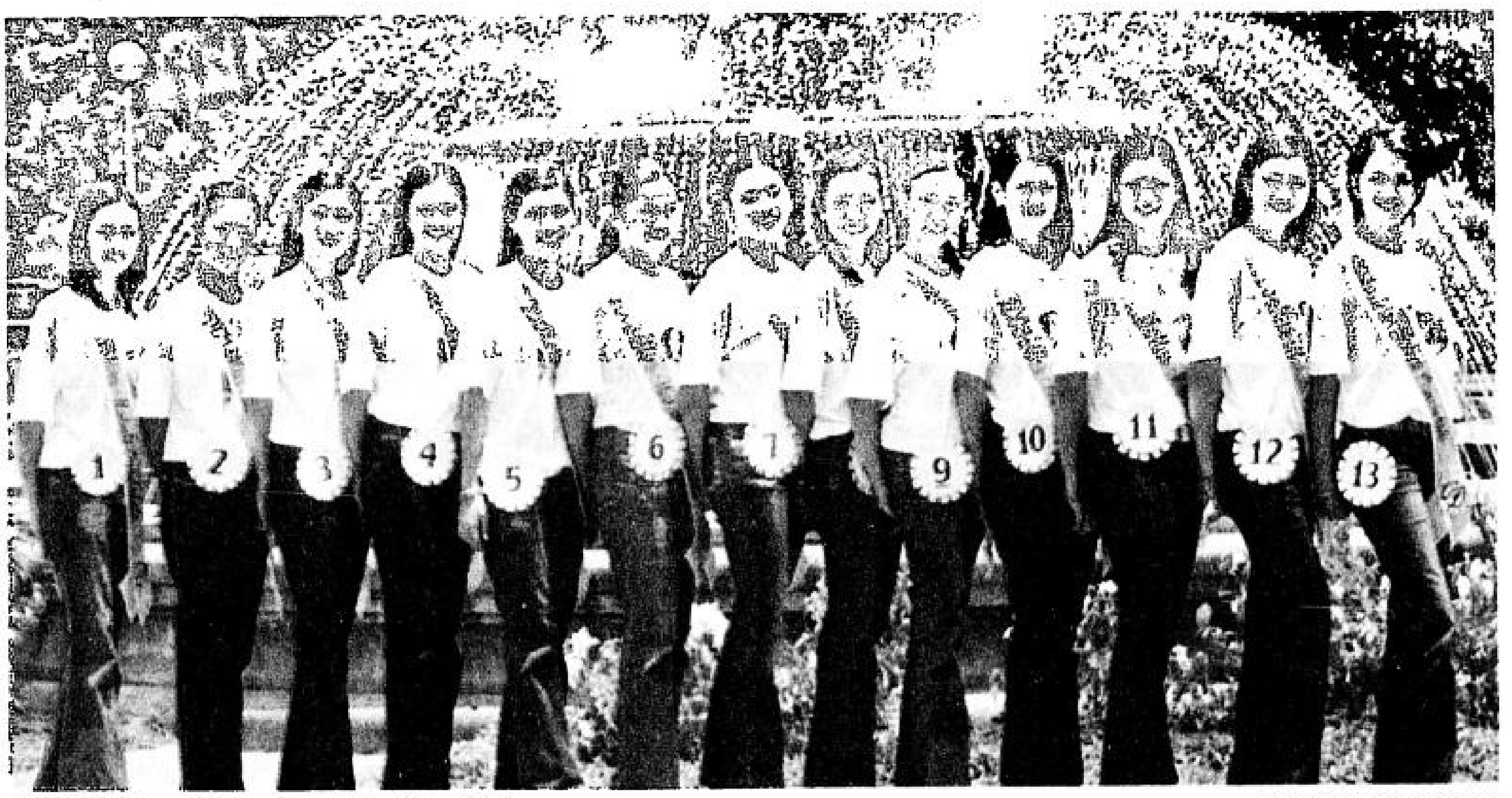
Eddie Mercado will host the coronation night. Jon Santos and Jaya will be the guest performers.

The Miss Makati and Miss Makati-Tourism winners will be part of the commemorative parade on Ayala Avenue on May 30.

The pageant's main beneficiary is the Makati Historical Restoration Foundation.

2003 Miss Makati Candidate
13

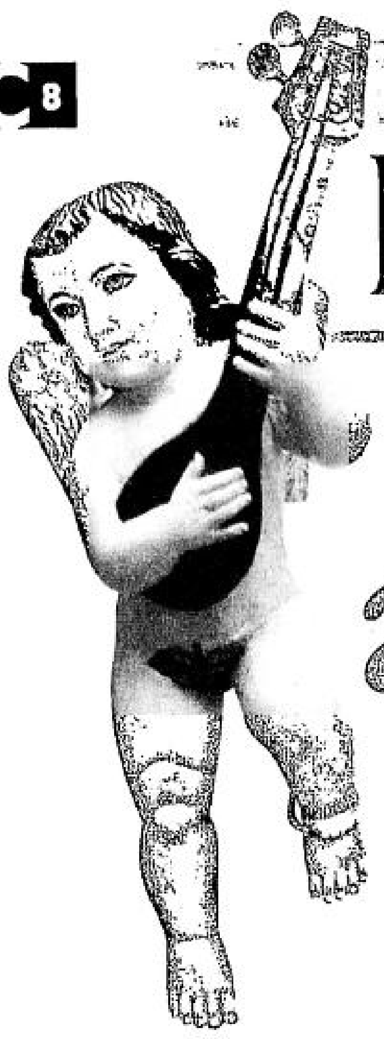
FINALIST Liandrea Natividad



MISS Makati candidates pose at the Makati Park.

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

ENTERTAINMENT



Allan K's guardian angels and clowns

By Leah Salterio

ALLAN K's bedroom and closets are striking in their neatness and cleanliness. They're certainly not as wild and uproarious as his humor.

The clothes are neatly folded and hung according to color, and the shoes are in a fastidious arrangement; the pairs are even individually wrapped in plastic.

OUT OF THE CLOSET

The comedian and TV host, who is seen on TV daily, admits he has a fixation for cleanliness.

"Gusto ko talaga malinis at maayos," Allan says. "My assistant and the people who live with me know that. In the years that they've been working for me, they've learned how I want things done."

His bedroom is without any clutter. The shelves are dust-free and the king-size bed is perfectly made. A 60-inch TV set looms in front of the bed, with DVDs under it.

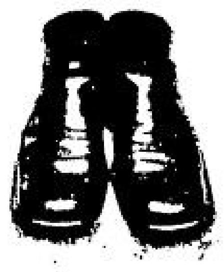
Distributed all over the house are Allan's angels and clowns. Even the legs of his wooden dining table are in the shape of angels, which he had especially made in a shop in Pampanga. Angel lights also brighten up his garden.

Allan has a stack of Architectural Digest which he reads for ideas to beautify and decorate his house. Copies of the magazine can be found even in his bathroom.

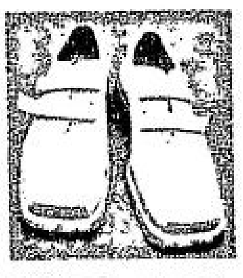
With his show biz earnings, Allan bought a new house in Las Piñas, which is bigger than his modest bungalow in the same city.

IMELDIFIC. Some of his shoes have not been worn yet.

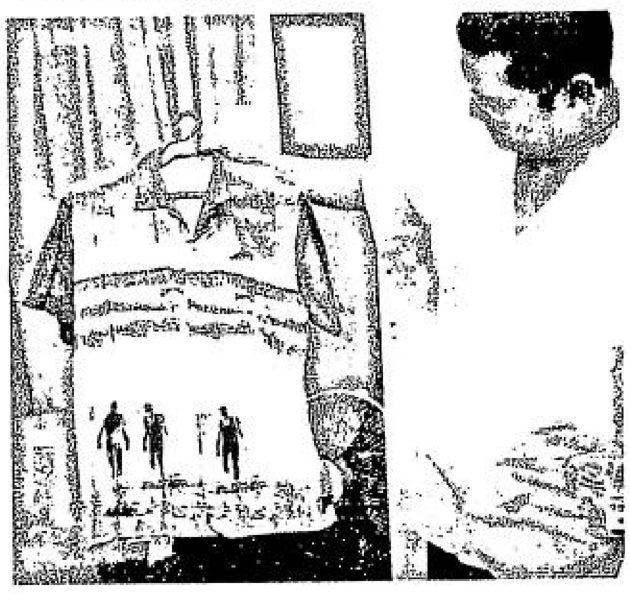
OUT OF AFRICA. He likes to wear this Morroccan long shirt to bed.



STEPPIN' OUT. He favors his Hugo Boss boots (above) and his white Versace (below).



PHOTOS BY ERIK ARAZAS



SURF SHIRT. He likes wearing Hawaiian prints.

SPIC AND SPAN. His closets are a model in neatness.

The new house is enough proof of the success of the native of Bacolod, who left that city in 1984 after he graduated from the West Negros College.

Allan shares the house with his younger brother, who is a member of the band M People, and three house-helps.

For clothes, Allan shops at Glorietta, Alabang Town Center and Greenhills. He says a big chunk of his income goes to clothes.

"I shop almost every week," he says. "When I go to the mall, I'm not happy to go home with only two bags. Sometimes, I go home with six.

"Even when buying shoes, I don't buy only two pairs. I love shoes. I have some shoes I haven't even worn. Sometimes, when I inspect my closets, I see clothes that I haven't worn yet. *'Yung iba naka* plastic *pa at may* price tags *pa*."

His size-8 shoes are tidily lined in a closet with glass doors, and some are kept in plastic shoe bags. Name the brand and Allan has it–Versace, Byblos, D&G, Kenzo, Gaultier. He also has ladies' stiletto heels with rhinestones, which he uses when he performs in drag onstage or on TV.

"My shoes are Imeldific," Allan boasts. "I like designer shoes. Even my rubber shoes are not ordinary *dahil gusto ko malandi.* I have all colors.

"The high heels are made-to-order because my feet are big for ladies' shoes."

He has a walk-in closet big enough to hold all his signature clothes. His belts are all branded. He has another closet full of Hawaiian polo shirts.

In one corner of the walk-in closet is an antique chest where he keeps his socks, all neatly folded according to color.

"It's easier to get them when they're arranged that way," Allan points out. "You can see at once what you want to use."

Favorite costume: "I love my purple suit made by Arnold Anota, which I wear with silver shoes. *Kulay talong ako* onstage, but I look good."

Formal wear: "My favorite is a David Mayer pin-striped suit which I bought from Linea Uomo. I used it in the recent 'Sing-Galing' finals."

Clowns: "I bought one that's an Armani and it cost me P16,000 *pero hindi ako nanghinayang.*"

Angels: "My favorite is the one standing beside my dining table. I bought it in an antique shop. I started collecting angels in 1995. I bought every angel piece you see in my house."

Makeup: "Mac."

Perfumes: "I have so many. If you look in one of the closets, you'll see it's like a department store display. I love Bulgari Extreme. Even my deodorant is Bulgari."

BRANDED. His belts have their own space

Bags: "I like my Louis Vuitton shoulder bag, and my Paul Smith black tote bag which I bring almost every day to 'Eat Bulaga' because it's roomy. I can put all my things in it."

Sleepwear. "I favor All Boxed Up boxers and white tank top. But I have a Moroccan gown which I bought in Bahrain and every time I go abroad, I bring it to wear in bed. If I stay abroad for one week, I wear it for one week."

Watches. "Techno Marine with diamonds. I wear it all the time."

Favorite shoes. "My Hugo Boss boots."

Favorite Hawaiian shirt: "This printed beige polo. I can wear it again and again."

Favorite pants: "DKNY graffiti capri and Levi's 501 denims. I'm a 501 guy."

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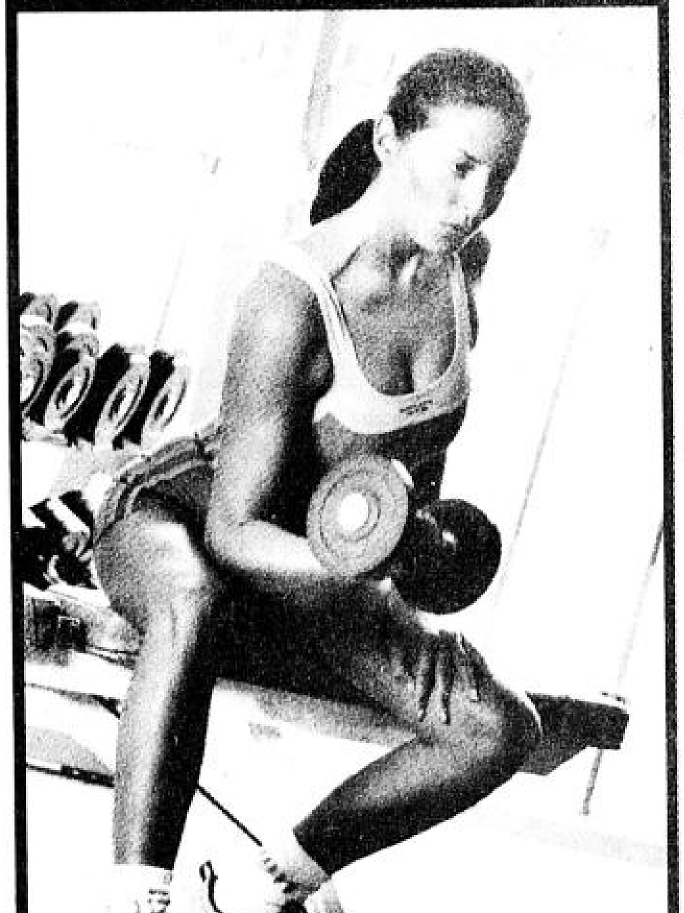

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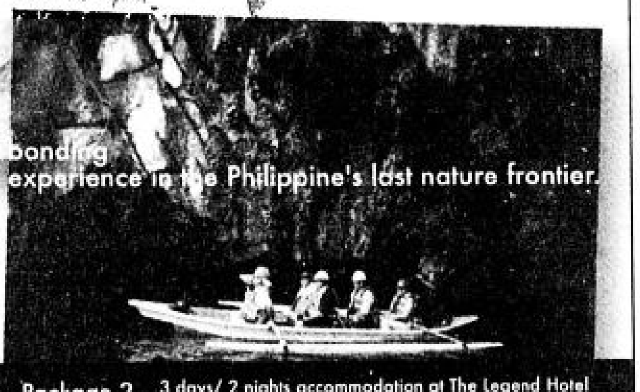
The Ilocos town is starting to reap the benefits of being a heritage town

THE WHITEWASH may obscure the fact that the original Vigan was a city of colorful houses. Gordon Inn puts some of that color back.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Why fuss about Vigan?

SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

WHEN we were in Vigan recently to shoot a video, someone on the crew asked, "Why is there such a fuss about Vigan?"

We should all take an active interest in what is happening in Vigan because it is one of the brightest lights in our decaying national heritage, and we should see to it that the little heritage we still have does not disappear completely.

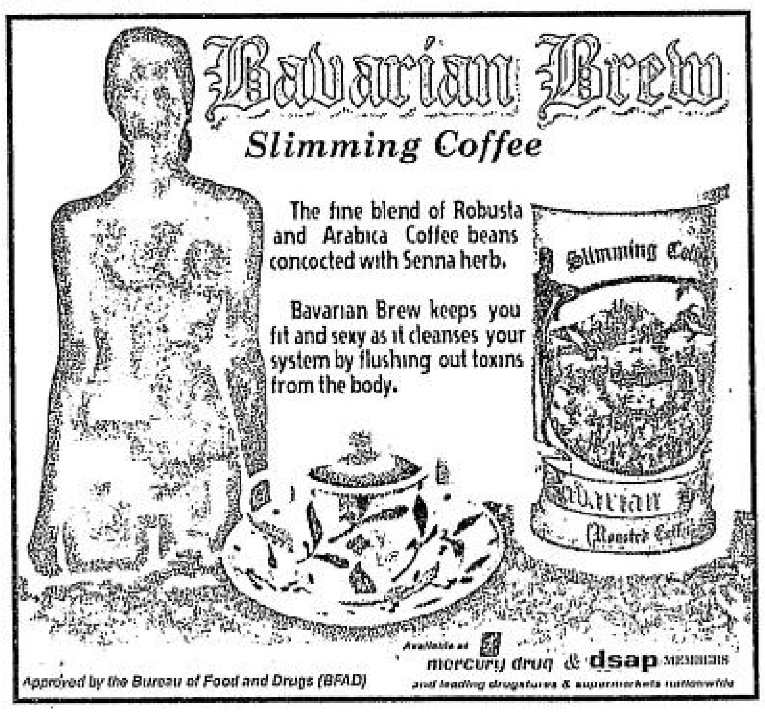
Vigan is part of our national patrimony. Therefore, each Filipino has a stake in Vigan as he does in Intramuros, in each of the Spanish colonial churches across the archipelago, in Arroceros Forest Park in downtown Manila, in the Rice Terraces of the Cordilleras, in Tubbataha Reef, and in all of the Philippine cultural and natural heritage sites.

The national patrimony belongs to each and every Filipino. So the Filipino has a big say in its maintenance just as every person has the right to the preservation of the family inheritance.

Of course, in some families, there is so much disagreement about inheritance that it results in conflict.

Vigan has had its fair share of

WHY/D3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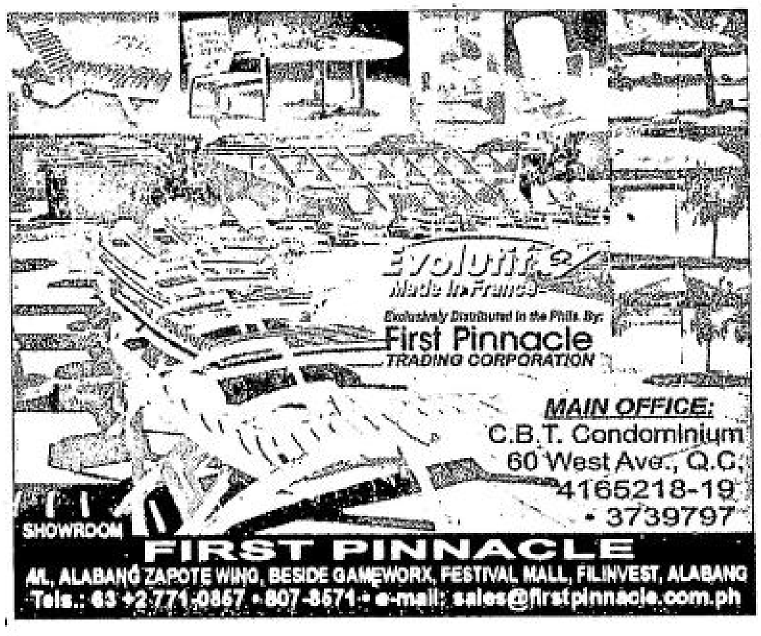
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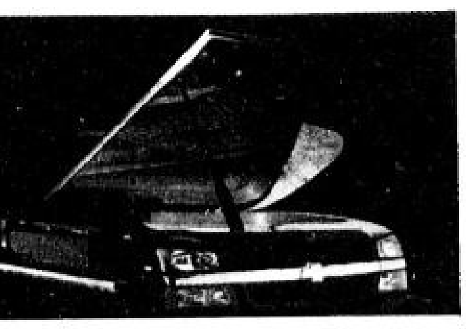
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Joaquin presents 'flower artists'

ONE OF Manila's foremost surrealist painters, as well as a portrait romanticist and an expressionist get together to mount "Joyeuses Fleurs" (Happy Flowers) at Galerie Joaquin (2/F, 371 corner P. Guevarra St. and Montessori Lane, Addition Hills, San Juan, tel. 723-9253 or [0917] 492-0076).

The show features 30 of the recent works of Raul Lebajo, Gig de Pio and Gene Gonzalez. It opens on May 31 at 7 p.m. and runs until June 13.

Lebajo is the country's leading surrealist painter. A major artist of the Luz Gallery since the early '70s, his works have become synonymous with color and creative imagination.

A winner several times over of the Shell National Art Competition, Lebajo has his works exhibited in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Germany, Switzerland, France and the United States.

For this show, Lebajo has prepared eight works in oil and canvas in his predominantly sunrise-inspired colors of orange, ochre, yellow, sienna and red.

De Pio, a former professor at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts, is one of the country's foremost portraitists. He worked closely with Vicente Manansala on several murals and Cesar Legaspi during the Legaspi-led Saturday Group before he became a founding member of the Blumentritt and the Guevarra Group of Artists.

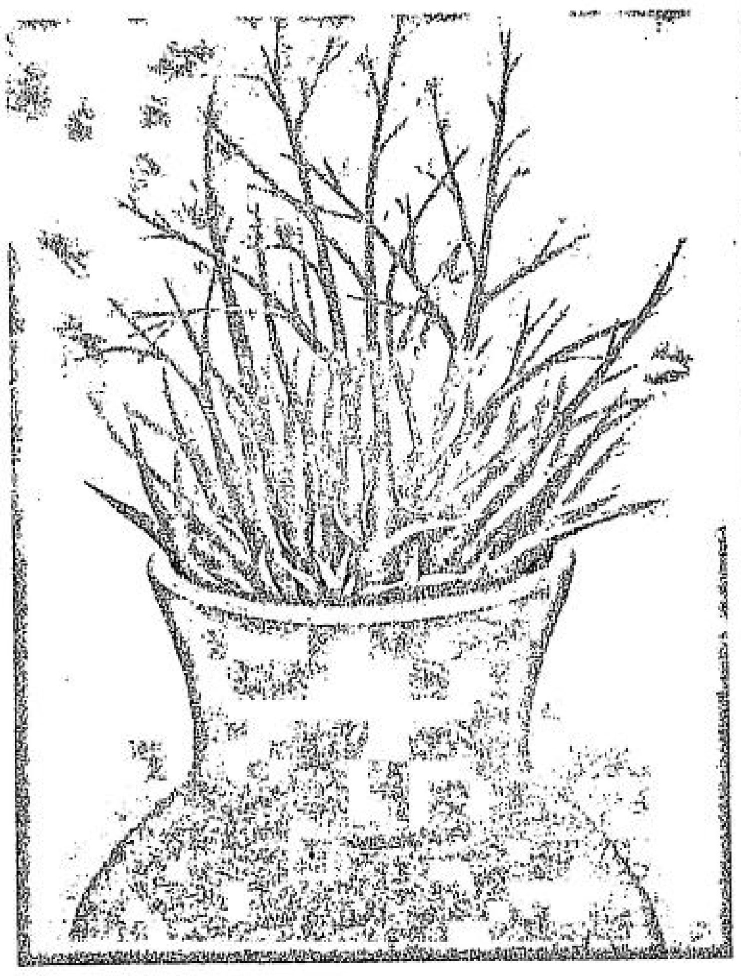
For this exhibition, De Pio applies the sensitivity of his portrait techniques and the pastel-like range of his palette to make 12 unique still lifes.

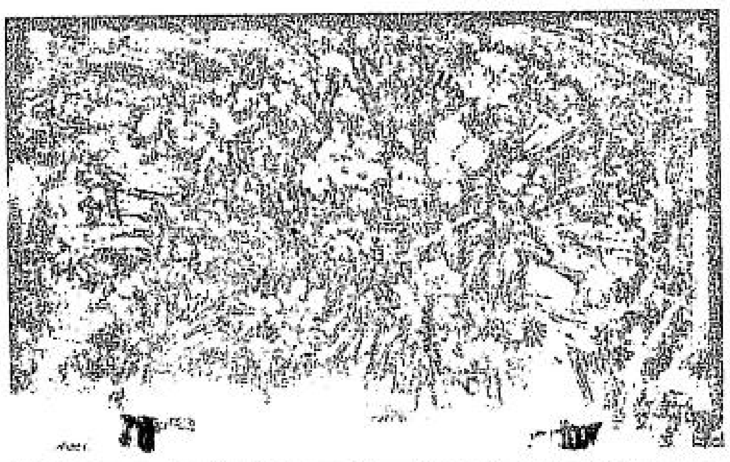
Gene Gonzalez has been painting since 1984. He has had several one-man shows and group exhibits. His colors are usually intense and burning hot vermilions, cadmium reds and yellows. For cool colors, he goes for icy cold blues.

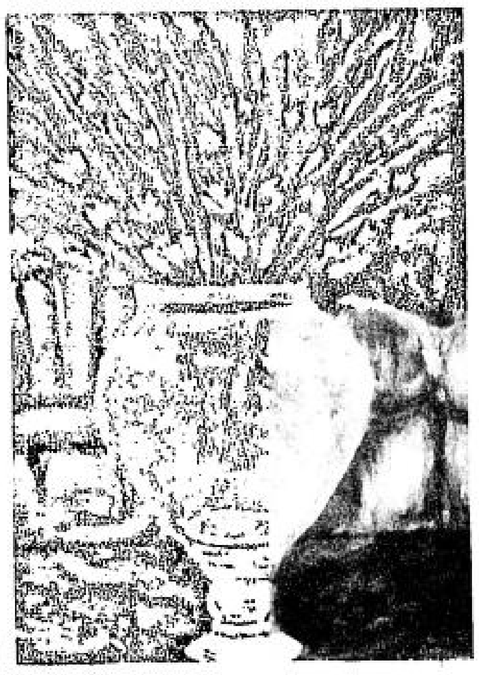
According to De Pio, flowers are the most natural expressions of beauty.

"Flowers have their own vibrant pattern that is so full of life and the challenge to the artist is to catch precisely that on his medium," he said.

Gonzalez says flowers show optimism. "To me, flowers are exciting because they are symbols of fertility and multiplicity," he said. "I want flowers whose colors scream."


"SPRING" by Raul Lebajo


"SPRAY of Colors" by Gig de Pio


"MIDDAY" by Gene Gonzalez

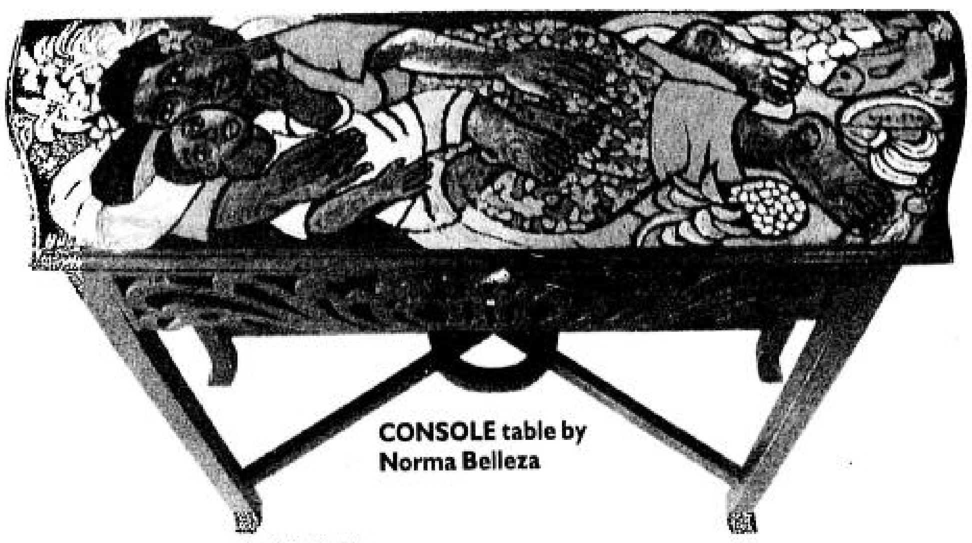
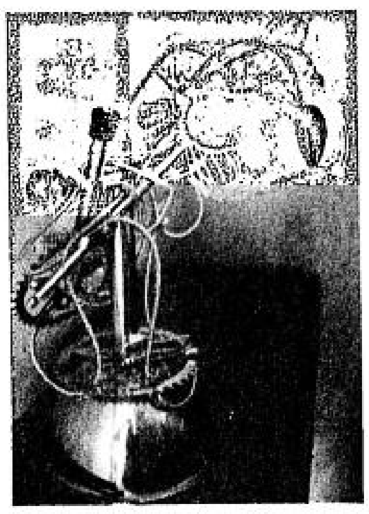

CONSOLE table by Norma Belleza

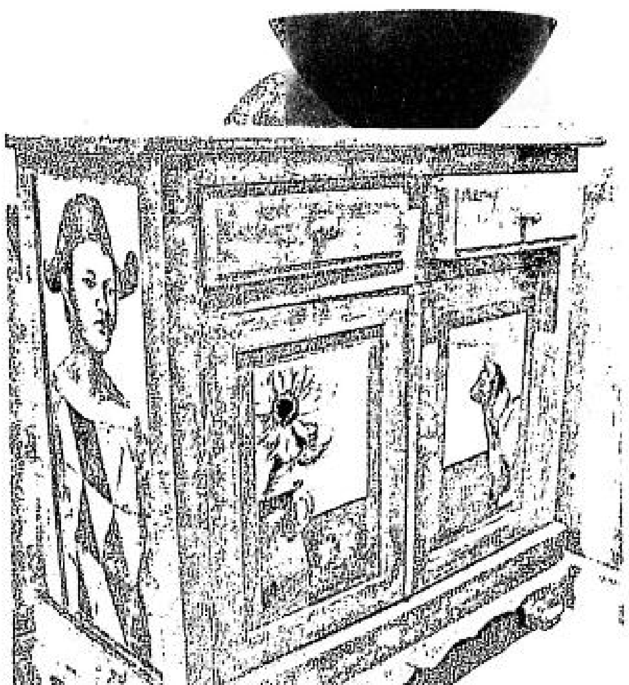
TABLE by Lauro Memije


SCULPTURE with clock by Michael Cacnio

Nine artists tackle functionality

ART and craft, style and function, design and creation.

Nine visual artists dare to blur the boundaries of tradition-bound dichotomies in "Function by Nine," an exhibit of various functional art objects by Fatima Antonio, Marcel Antonio, Norma Belleza, Michael Cacnio, Fil Dumalo, Lauro Memije, Raul Piedra, Lirio Salvador and Rommel Tuazon. Presented by Gallery Nine at the SM Megamall Artwalk, the show runs May 28-June 10.


CABINET by Marcel Antonio

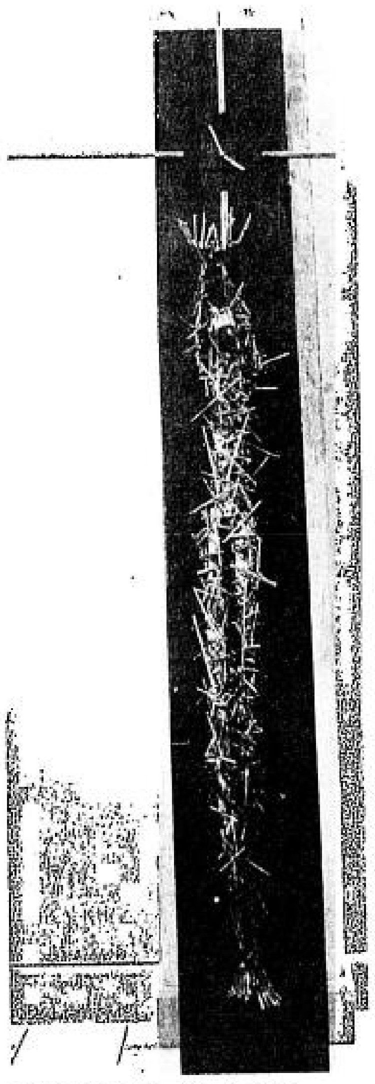
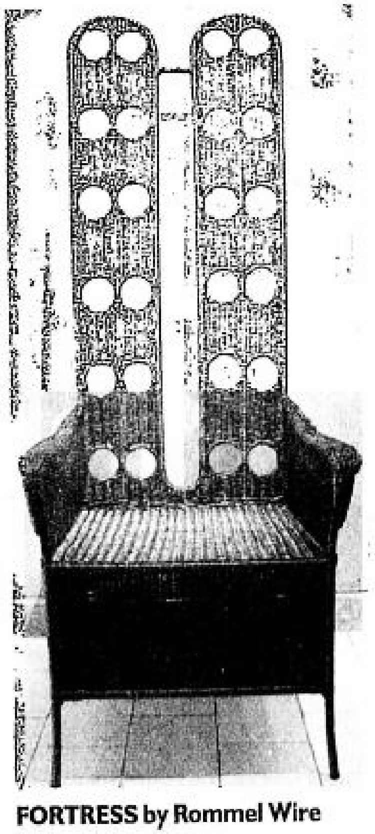

SCULPTURE with clock by Michael Cacnio

TABLE by Antonio


FORTRESS by Rommel Wire Tuazon

DIVIDER by Fil Dumalo

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CORONA

Why fuss about Vigan?

From page D1

conflict over how to properly preserve its houses and its history. If there were a heritage mafia in the country, the mayor of Vigan would be among its members. Over the years she has navigated the conservation of Vigan through thick and thin, through one controversy after another. Sometimes we agreed on issues. Other times we disagreed. But there was never any question that we were after the best for Vigan.

After its 1999 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) World Heritage inscription, Vigan has become a changed town.

When I made my last visit there about three years ago, the town had barely come to terms with its singular patrimony of being the premier heritage town of the Philippines.

At that time discussion was heavy about everything: where boundaries of the conservation zone would be, what types of construction would be allowed within that zone, what the "proper" method of conserving houses was, how to revitalize the main plaza, what to do with delivery trucks and tricycles within the conservation zone, and the often-asked question, "When will the tourists start coming?"

Now it is four years after its Unesco inscription. Some of the pre-inscription questions have been answered.

Changed town

What is the change in Vigan? Today more locals understand and accept the unique course of Vigan as a heritage city. More (but still not enough) houses are being restored. That the debate on "proper" restoration methods has not yet been completely exhausted is a healthy sign that there is genuine concern on developing a restoration method appropriate to Vigan.

Plaza Salcedo at the center of Vigan is among the most beautiful in the country. Vigan Cathedral and the Arzobispado (Archbishop's Residence) next to it visually anchor the plaza. At the opposite end of the Plaza are the government buildings, the Vigan City Hall and the Ilocos Sur Capitol.

The former St. Paul's College, a huge Spanish colonial building on the plaza, has been successfully converted into a shopping center after much public outcry on the appropriateness of the conversion. Now that it has been completed, it is an outstanding example of how an old building can be reused for new purposes.

Less successful is the commercial development on the opposite end of the plaza where fire gutted the seminary that once stood there. Following international conservation principles (Icomos Charter of Venice), an important building like the seminary situated in a heritage zone such as the plaza should be "returned." Therefore the seminary would have to be reconstructed. But what had happened instead was that three fast-food outlets were constructed along the plaza in ersatz Viganesque architecture.

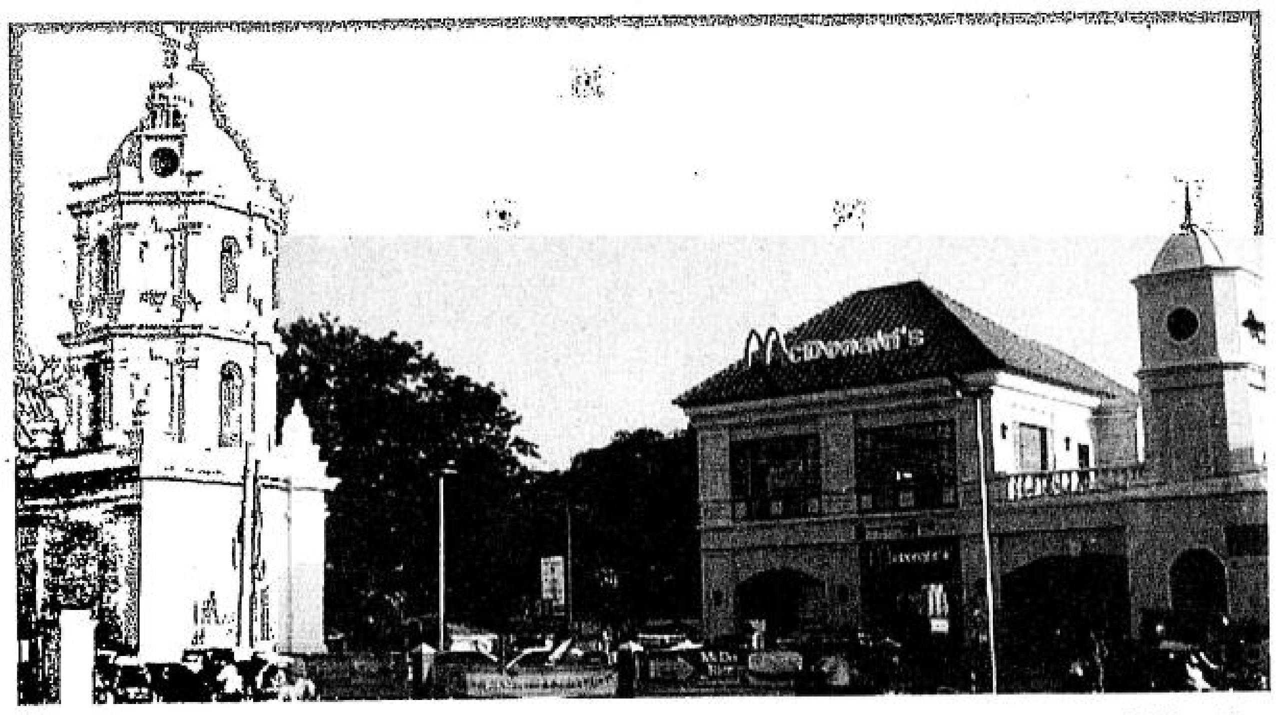
That poses problems since people may mistakenly think that Vigan architecture actually looked like the new buildings. Following that logic, a wave of pseudo-architecture could develop. In conservation, maintaining the original is the principle of authenticity. Authenticity simply says that there's nothing like the real thing and we should do all we can to keep (or restore) what is original. Vigan is historically so important that authenticity is imperative.

Back

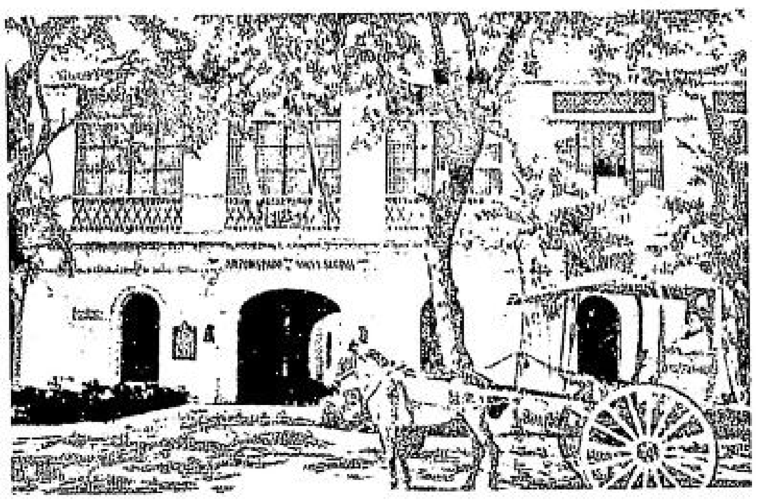
There is a new life in Plaza Salcedo these days. The tourists have finally come. What makes it better is that visitors are mostly locals who come from all over the country to experience Vigan and imbibe Filipino heritage. Not only that, local tourists spend more money buying *pasalubong* and eating in restaurants than the foreign tourists on package tours do. Tourism is bringing income to Vigan.

Seeing tourists walking around the plaza and the neighboring historic district validates heated discussions on why Vigan should not commercialize its history for tourism purposes. Seeing the number of new bed-and-breakfasts opening in the old houses is more validation that the right steps were taken four years ago in planning and preparing Vigan for both tourism and heritage preservation.

Change did not come easily to Vigan, though. With each step taken, the city had to deal with public outcry. Sometimes, the going was tough. But in retrospect, the city was forced to do a better job and to consider other options because of public concern for the preservation of Vigan. It was turbulent for a while. It was public-private effort at its best, after attempts to arrive at a consensus amid heated discussion by Bigueños in Vigan and in other parts of the country.



IS tawdry fast-food architecture compatible with the authentic architecture of old Vigan?



ARCHBISHOP'S residence retains its gracious colonial sheen despite the centuries.

Vigan is our national pilot project for the conservation of heritage towns. You learn as you go when doing a pilot project. Mistakes have been made by both the public and private sectors, which have added to the pilot project learning curve. We found out that it takes cooperation between public and private sectors to make conservation work and to make it meaningful. Making a fuss gets issues aired out and solutions agreed upon.

A few facts about Vigan will answer the question of "Why fuss about Vigan?"

Fact 1: Vigan is really a pretty place that deserves its tourist destination status. It should benefit economically from tourism. However, we should realize that the significance of Vigan goes beyond tourism. Underneath its surface is a lot of history that should be protected for our children to experience.

Fact 2: Vigan is where the largest collection of Spanish colonial architecture still survives in the Philippines. The architecture is a fusion of East and West, of Ilocano, Chinese and Spanish. It is the only town of its kind in the country, and in the world for that matter.

Fact 3: In recognition of the uniqueness and the universal value of Vigan, the town has been inscribed in the prestigious Unesco World Heritage List.

Fact 4: Each Filipino has a stake in Vigan because it is an important part of his national heritage. The city government of Vigan bears responsibility for this since it is the custodian of the heritage.

So go out and make a fuss about Vigan and the rest of our shared national heritage! You have a strong voice—it is your heritage, after all.

E-mail the author at afvillalon@hotmail.com

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Jaime Zobel's art in Greenbelt 3

GREENBELT 3's "urban oasis" philosophy finds support and fulfillment in Jaime Zobel's art, which now adorns parts of the mall.

ZOBEL

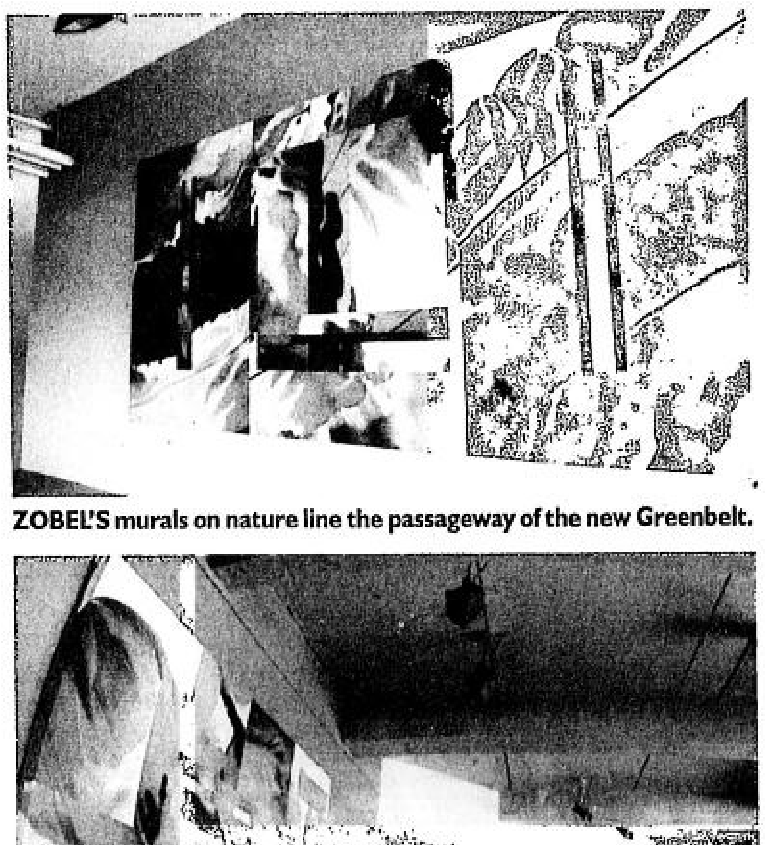
Four of the industrialist-artist's murals can be seen in Greenbelt 3's underpass, and more recently, his photo-collage murals depicting lush florals and foliage have found their home in the new Greenbelt mall's tunnel-way.

Zobel, head of one of the country's biggest business conglomerates and long a nature lover, was inspired by a vision of merging beauty, nature and development in a highly urbane setting.

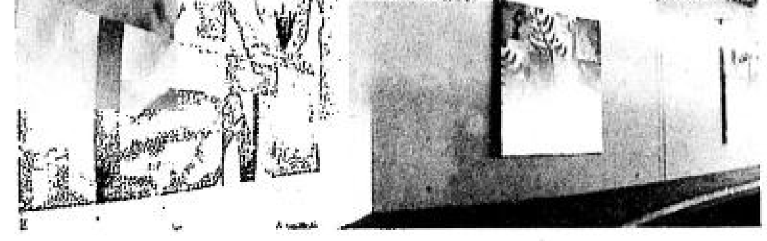
"Every time I went through the tunnel, I kept asking myself how to spruce it up and lighten it up, making it look alive and not like an actual tunnel. It then occurred to me that if we were to follow the concepts the huge billboards, which advertisers use along the highways, I could choose a theme that would brighten up the area, and which would not necessarily be that expensive. I even suggested that if it works well, we could do annual renderings with different motifs each time" he said.

"It was all part of my being so delighted with the new Greenbelt," he added. "The fact that there are so many beautiful open spaces and greenery inspired me to propose using some of my collages with themes along the lines of 'foliage' and 'green'."

And so he did. Now Greenbelt is a much "greener" mall for it.



ZOBEL'S murals on nature line the passageway of the new Greenbelt.



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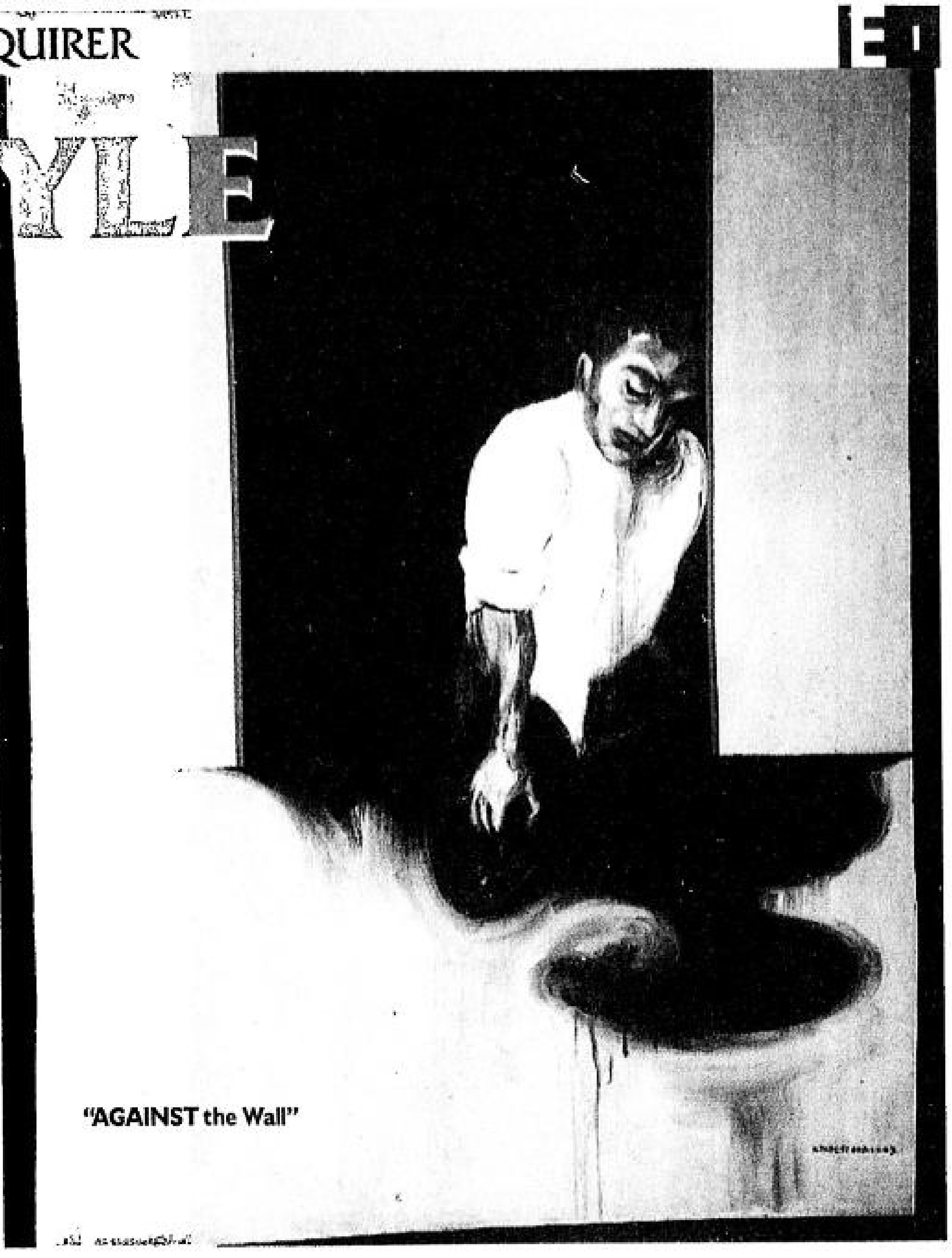
DRAWINGS on the wall meant to demystify the place

His latest show would seem to revive the aesthetics of the 1960s



"AGAINST the Wall"

Surface gloss and subversive subtext in the art of Kiko Escora

By Constantino C. Tejero

CULTURE mandarins are likely to be discomfited by the art of Kiko Escora. Because it is at once provocative and accessible, that is, it could be high art but it is popular.

Just look at the 13 pieces in his exhibit "Social Reality," organized by the Big & Small Art Co. and ongoing until May 31 in the Art Center at Artwalk, 4/L SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong City.

These are large-scale diptychs and smaller ones, done in acrylic on canvas. Color planes of burnt orange, lilac, slate-blue, olive-green, red, black, and large multihued stripes serve as the flat background for the human drama the artist depicts.

The exhibit's title refers not to the reality of the social realists but to Escora's personal reality. "Basically it's about my reality, my own social circle," he clarifies.

Many of these pieces are a blend of painting and graphic art on the canvas (as in "Urban Warriors," "Tingle," "Dreaming in Absinthe")—which has an effect on the viewer similar to watching a movie like "Who Killed Roger Rabbit?" where live-action characters interact with toons. Some have the look of a cut-and-paste reproduction ("Rapture," "Smoke Ray").

Is the artist out to attract a market or audience with this technique?

"It's not really calculated," says Escora. "It's more on feel when I'm doing it. But I'm conscious. I'm aware."

What's more discomfiting is the way the artworks are presented in the gallery. They are unframed, and many are mounted on movable walls consisting of whitewashed wood panels so arranged as to resemble a labyrinth, through which gallery-goers have to wend to gain access to them.

Perceived links

In one instance, the image on the canvas overflows to the wall (the legs of the inebriated in "Dreaming in Absinthe"). What's more, the artist has filled the white walls with gray drawings and graffiti.

In this, the exhibit resembles Basquiat's work, which would connect Escora to Graffiti Art. Before anyone could find a deeper meaning to it, however, he explains it away as just a plain case of soiling the walls.

Says he: "My impression when showing in Megamall is, Wow, *pare*, it's big! We all forget that it's just another exhibit space. So I want to demystify that place. I was inspired by wall

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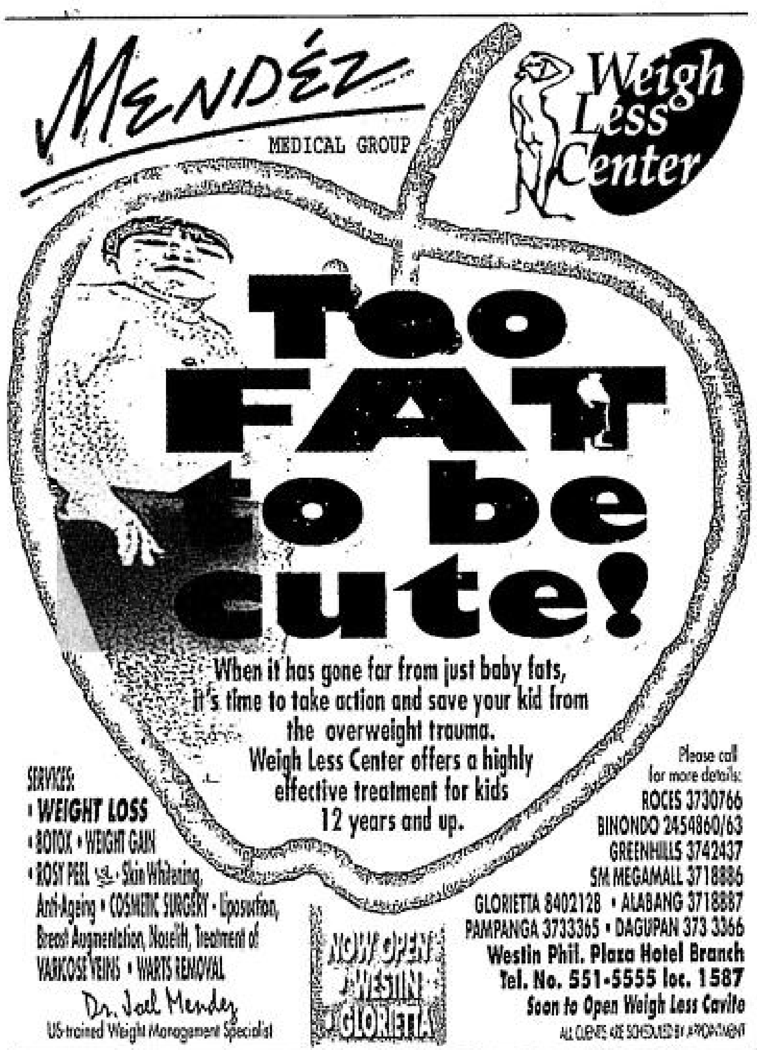
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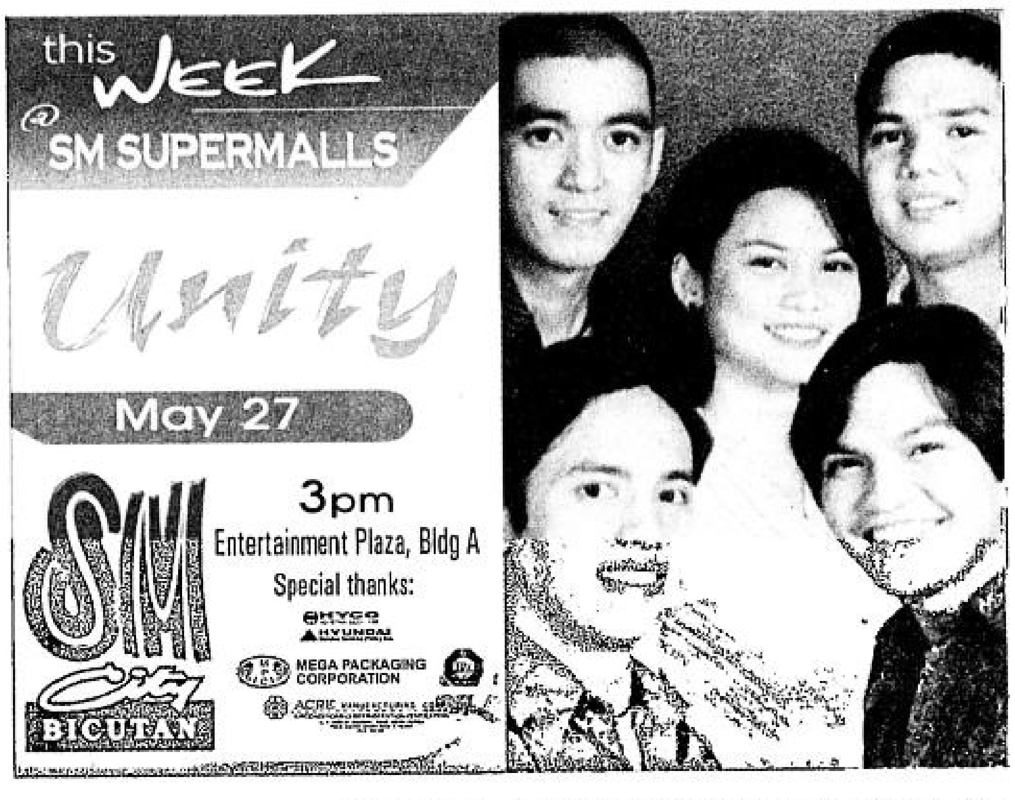
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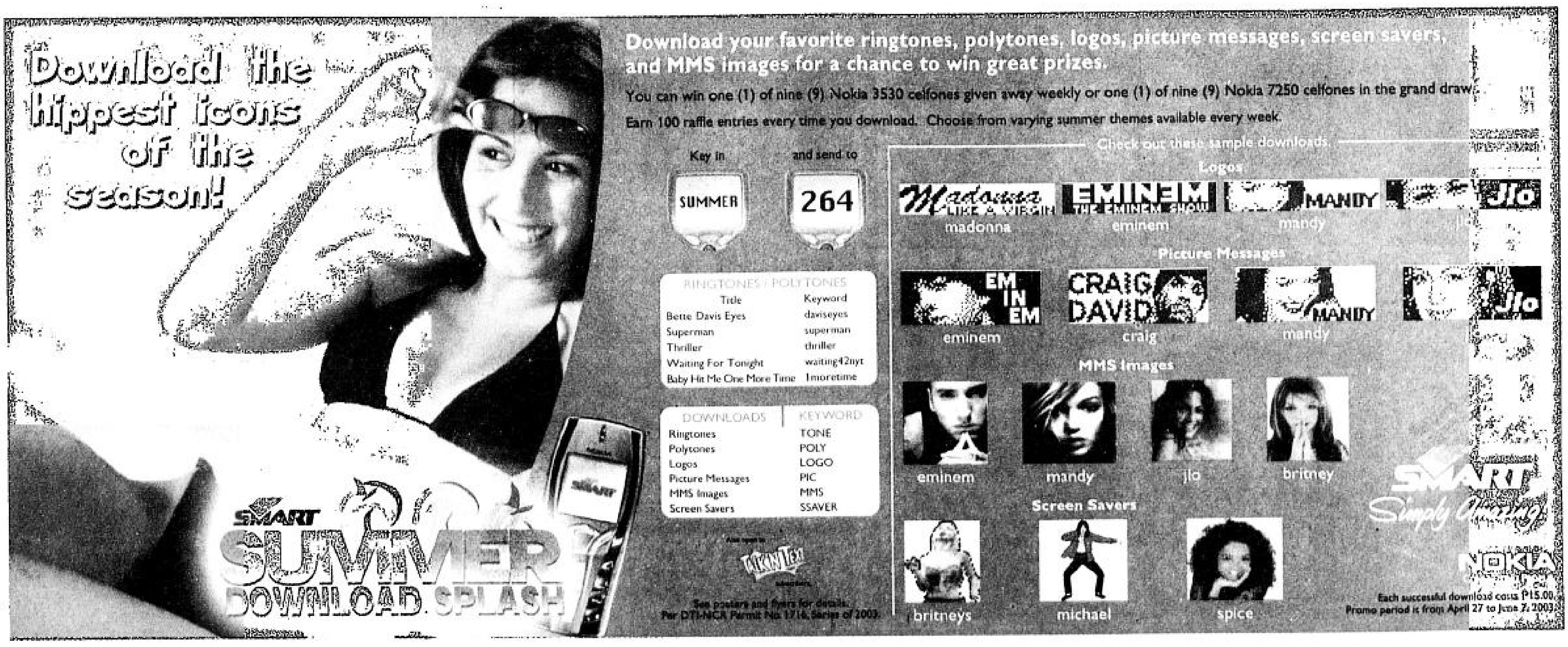
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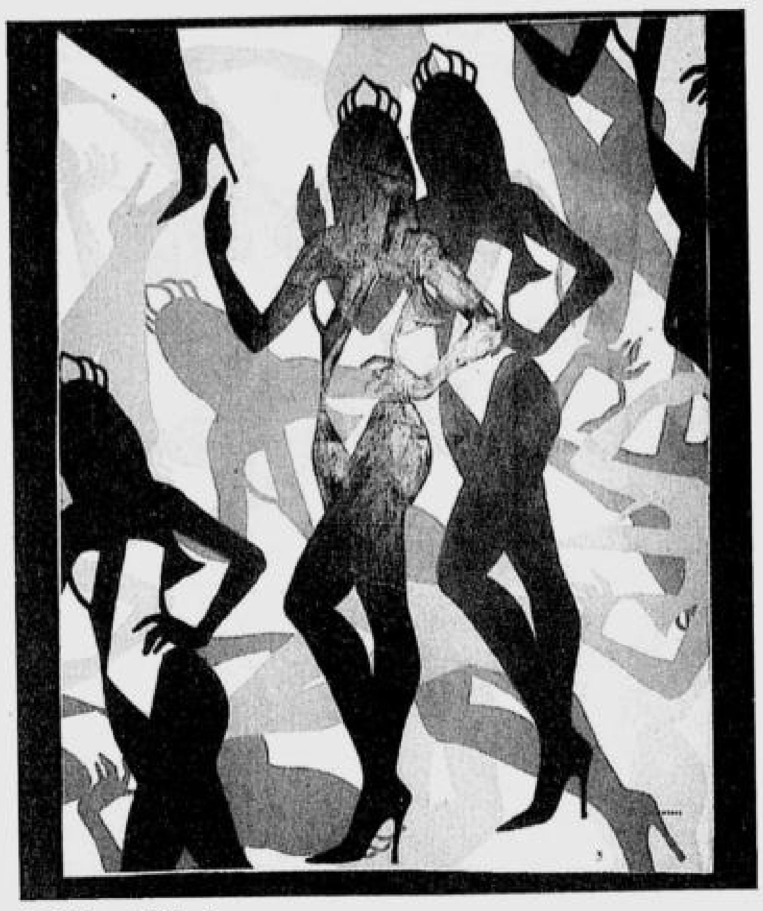
Surface gloss and subversive subtext in the art of Kiko Escora


"ONE in a Million"

From page E1

taggings, which they called graffiti art before. These artists tag the walls to say, Hey, this is my signature, this is my tag. So with that I want to deformalize *nang konti ang* Megamall.

"But I'm not coming from tagging, though I'm interested in that kind of art. It's just an instrument for me. I've seen the Basquiat film by Schnabel, and I do like his work, but I'm not a hard-core fan."

By his art's look, he may also be referencing the glitz and gloss of Takashi Murakami and Rosenquist, which would link him with Pop Art.

"Rosenquist's works are photo-based—but in a way there's a resemblance because he was also a billboard artist," Escora explains the perceived link with his interest in computer graphics. "I can relate with some images of Murakami."

Moreover, the whole exhibit would seem to revive the aesthetics of the 1960s, particularly Warhol, Lichtenstein, Cy Twombly, Tom Wesselmann.

"Lichtenstein is more academic," he says, on the effort to connect his graphic illustrations with Lichtenstein's comicbook art. "For me, at least, *walang* reference."

Metaphoric fusion

The multiple exposure of image ("One in a Million," "The Invisible Artist") resembles the screenprinting of Warhol. The look of this impersonal process belies the radical subtext.

The link with Warhol inevitably gives rise to the question of art's marketability and mass appeal.

"I want my work to be attractive, so people will look at it, and not just the artists," says Escora. "And Megamall is the best venue for that. No, I don't resent my being popular. It's better that people see the art than they don't see it at all. It's a way of educating people about art.

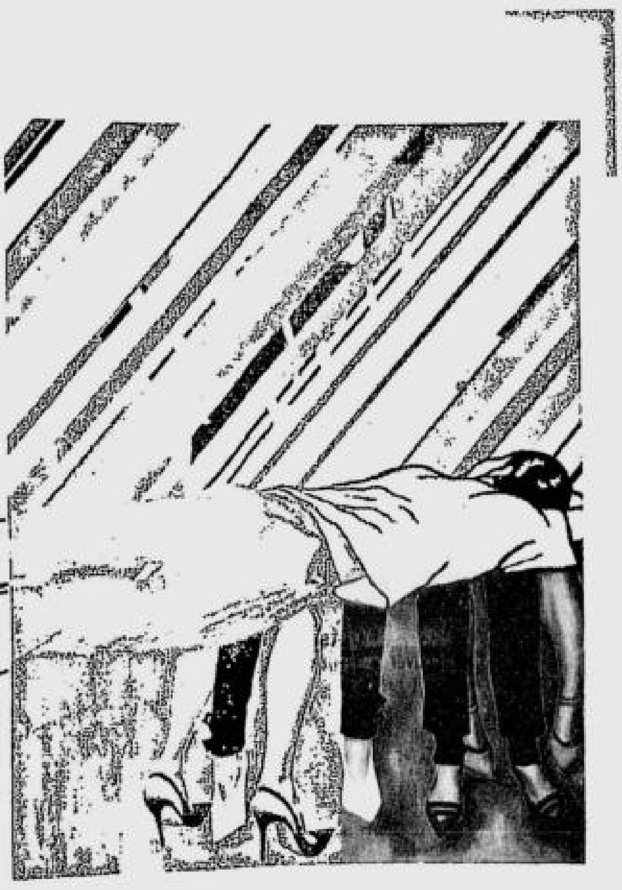
"As for being popular economically—*mahirap 'yun*. Maybe it pays, but in the end you're not happy."

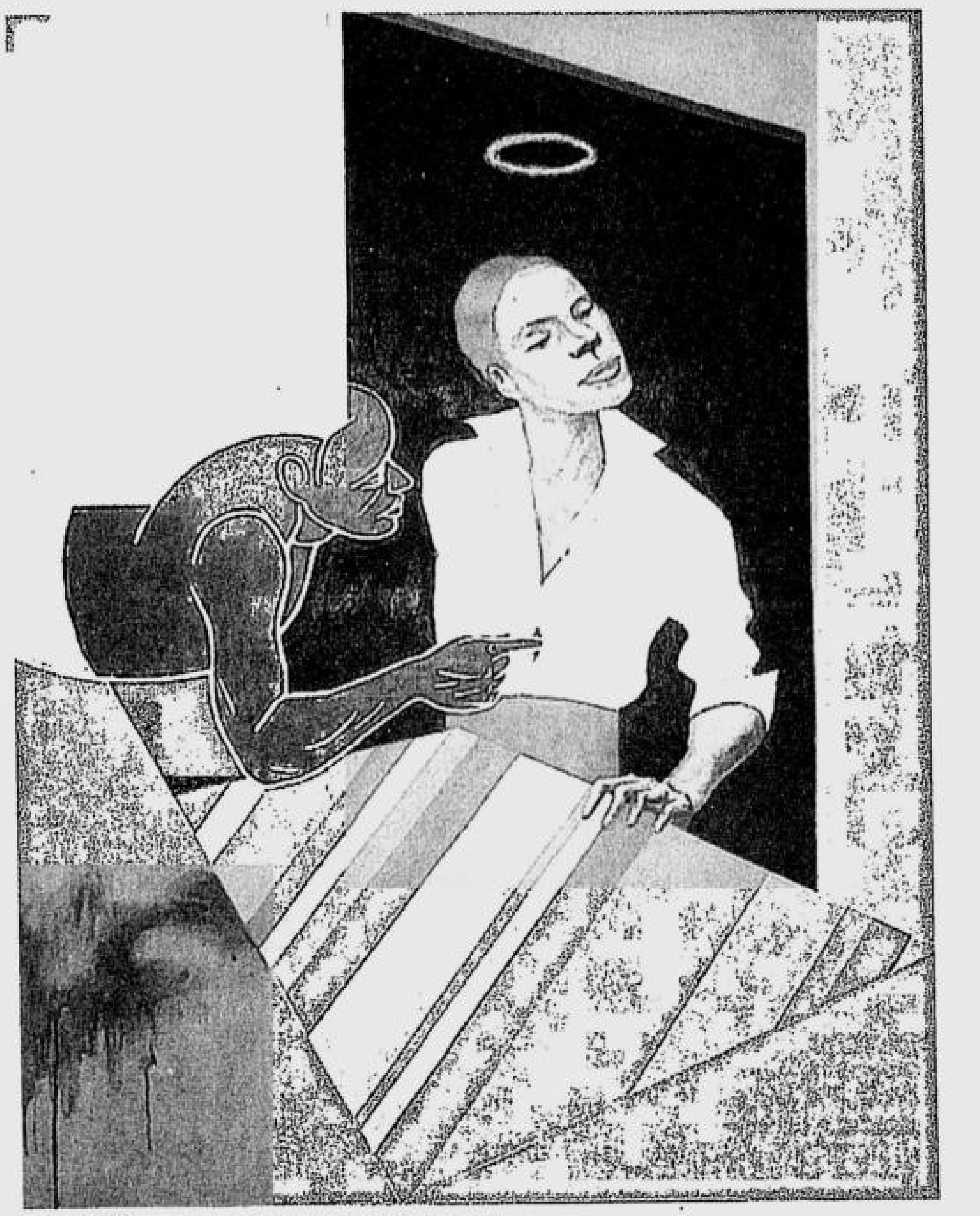
For now, he says he doesn't have to compromise his art in order to sell. "I can do what I want. I can do more, but happy *na rin ako sa ginagawa ko ngayon*. To make art popular—that's the goal. I want to do more experimentation, though. This show is playful but adventurous."

His art seems calibrated for the international scene. Only 33 years old, he is already a leading light of his generation.

His latest show could be seen as a metaphoric fusion of light and dark. Because beneath the artworks' bright and glossy surface lies the human dark. In their neon hues and primary colors, one sees the punk world of wasted youth, dark sexuality, the flesh trade, flight from the human condition.

That may sound highfalutin, indeed, but just investigate a piece like "Against the Wall." Amid planes of pastel colors is a portrait of a man driven to the wall by desperation. And the piece was inspired by Francis Bacon.


"DREAMING in Absinthe"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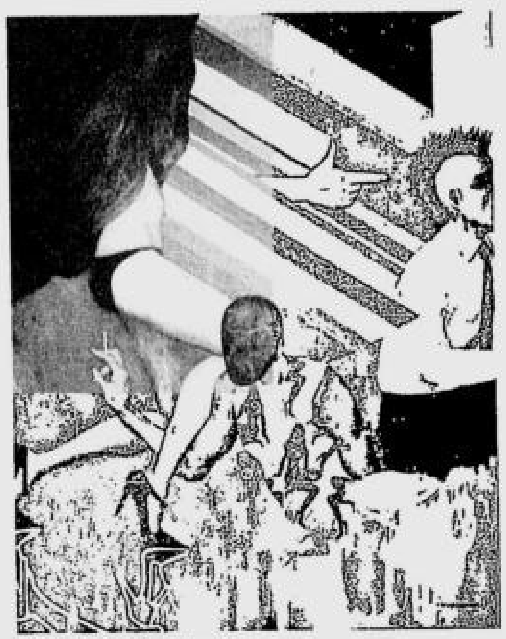
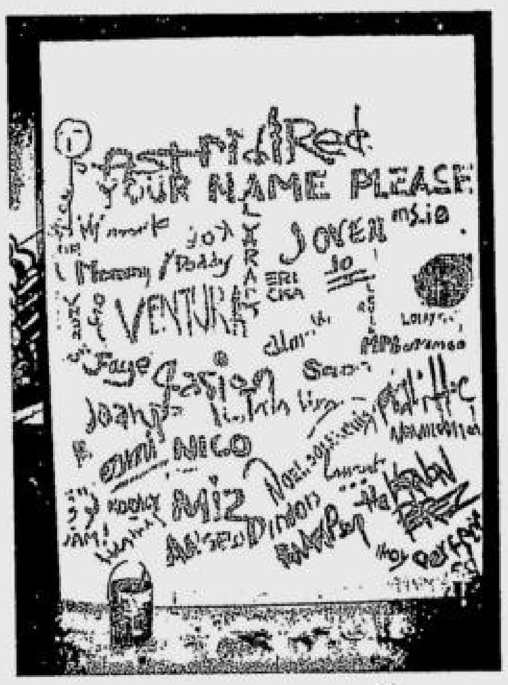
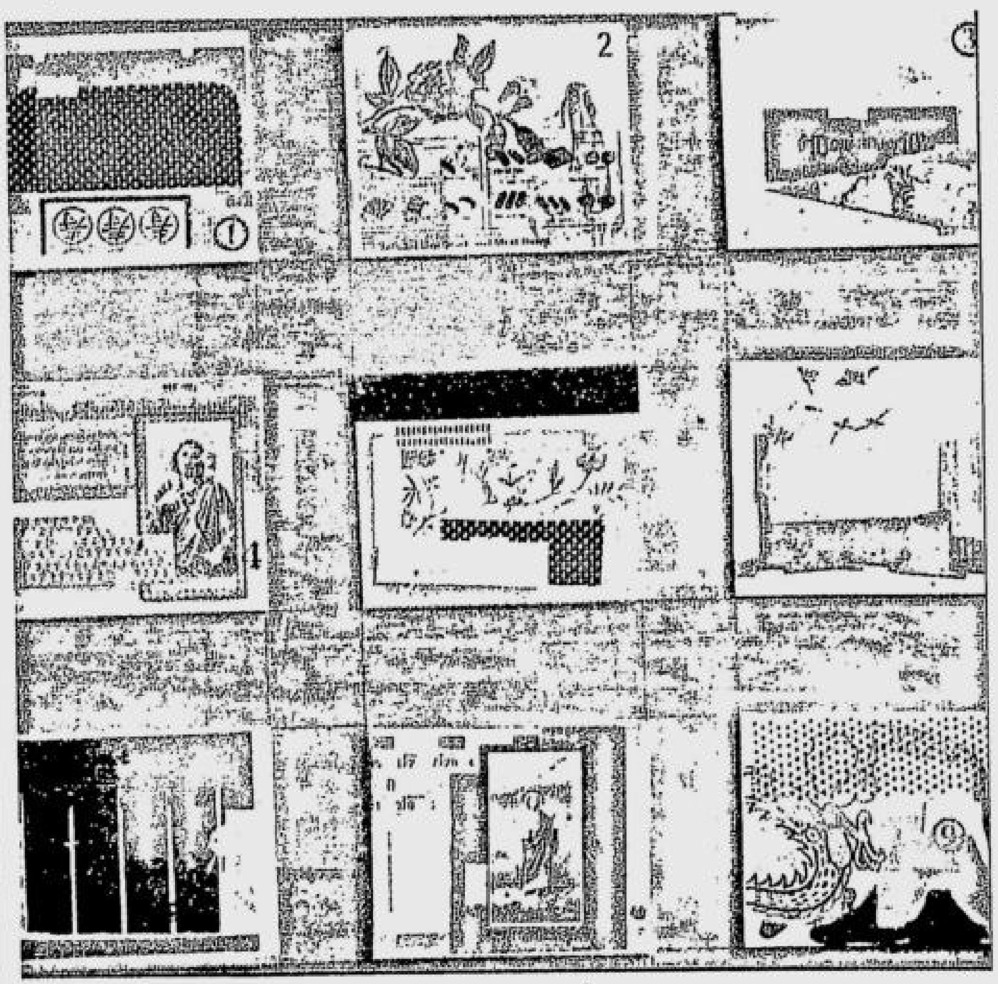

"URBAN Warriors"



Javier's collages at West


"FREEZING the Flight of Hummingbirds," a collage by Geraldine G. Javier

MUNTINLUPA ART GALLERY
THE NEWLY opened Muntinlupa Art Gallery on the 3/L Metropolis Star, Alabang

VISUAL ARTS

WEST Gallery presents "Freezing the Flight of Hummingbirds," an exhibition of over 400 postcard-size collages by Geraldine G. Javier. The show serves as a catalog of the various kinds of paper collected over a long period of time. It runs May 29-June 10 in SM Megamall. Call 634-1284.

METROPOLIS Star in Alabang recently opened the Muntinlupa Art Gallery on its third level. A show in the new gallery features the group exhibit of Ramil Palma, Waldz Villanueva, Jojit Bejina, Marni Corpuz, Rendi de la Cruz, Mario Patdu, Ivy Patdu, Elgene Bautista, Nim and Benjo.

ELOI Hernandez's exhibition of black and white photographs opens on June 5 at Bulwagang Fernando Amorsolo (Small Gallery), 4/F Cultural Center of the Philippines, Roxas Boulevard, Manila. The exhibit runs until June 30. Call 832-3702.

AN EXHIBIT of recent works of Dionesio Gonzales, "The Wild Touch," installed by Ayala Museum at Food and Art Gallerie on the 12/F George Ty Tower on Ayala Avenue, is on view until May 31. The exhibit features 36 oil-on-canvas paintings.

JEMINA presents her fifth solo exhibit, "Breathing Space," at The Big & Small Art Co., 4/L SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong, on May 21-June 2. Call 687-7425.

VINCENT Padilla, Jerson Samson, Elmer Roslin and Riel Hilario examine the personal and social dimensions of male desire and gaze in "Libog," an exhibit of paintings at Boston Gallery, 2-A Boston St., Cubao, QC, until May 31. Call 722-9205.

KULAY Diwa Galleries presents three exhibits featuring Cristina Taniguchi from Dumaguete City, Ruel Salvatierra from Vigan City and Rey Bollozos from Cagayan de Oro City. The exhibits will be on view until June 8.

RAUL Isidro's (above left) 44th one-man show opened at West Gallery in Megamall recently. Shown with him are Dr. Senen Garcia, Napolcom Commissioner Celia Sanidad-Leones, Justice Josefina Salonga, Virgie Barbers; (second row) Belle Isidro, Trish Barbers and Gov. Lyndon Barbers.

Sikat pays tribute to late octogenarian artist

THE SINING Kulay at Tinta (Sikat) will hold the exhibit "Tribute to Mommy Tanching" on May 27-June 7 at The Art Gallery of Philippine Heart Center.

The exhibit, which formally opens at 6 p.m. tomorrow, commemorates the life and times of Constancia Diaz-Manalo, the mother of the late journalist Louie Beltran. "Mommy Tanching" died last December. She was 84.

Late in life, Ms Manalo learned the basics of art and drawing from art teacher Pol Mesina. She later turned to painting, participated in group shows, sold more than 40 paintings, and became a consultant of Sikat. Her works were known for their optimistic outlook and cheerful spirit.

Sikat is a group of artists based in Antipolo. For this exhibit, participating artists are Noel Bautista, Rene Belison, Salvador Bernardo, Ige Concepcion, Crisan, Robert de Aro, Manny de Guzman Jr., Rhoel Galit, Lyndon Garrovillas, Honey Banal-Huertas, Joel Janer, Kaiseria, Nene Laporga, Pol Mesina Jr., Art Morales, Dyna Ondoy, Rejoice Andoy, Andy Pernia, Aed Solis, Bong Sison, Jun Taniang, Tina Tibang, Andy Urag, Tam Urao, Norberto Villez, and Molly Yap.

Pariticipating guest artists are Rafael Pacheco, Remy Boquiren and Fernando Sena.

THE WESTIN Philippine Plaza's The Gallery features the sculptures of Henry Cainglet and the paintings of Pedro Garcia II until May 31.

SIKAT artists who will hold "Tribute to Mommy Tanching" May 27-June 7 at the Philippine Heart Center Art Gallery

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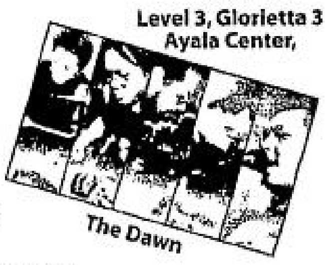

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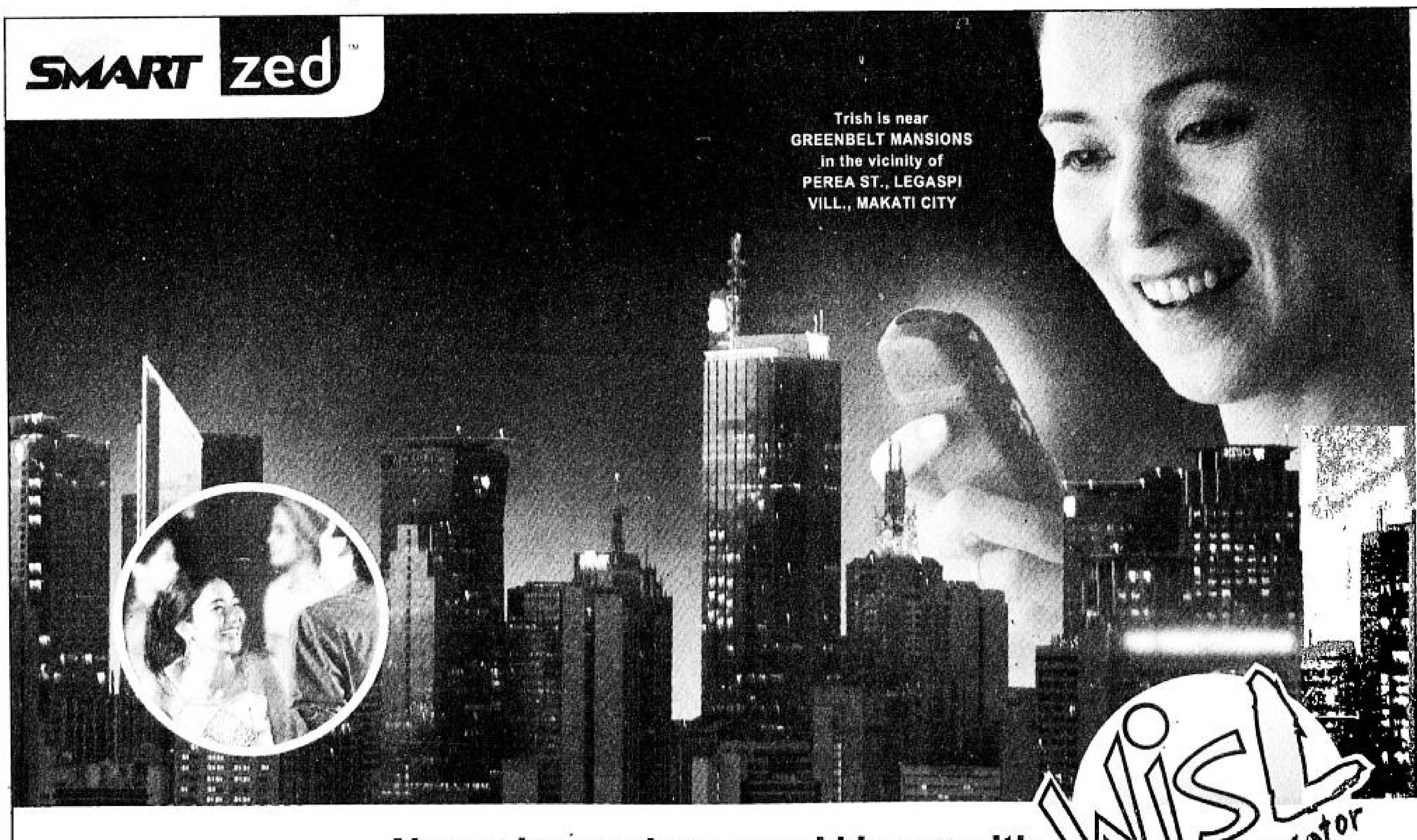

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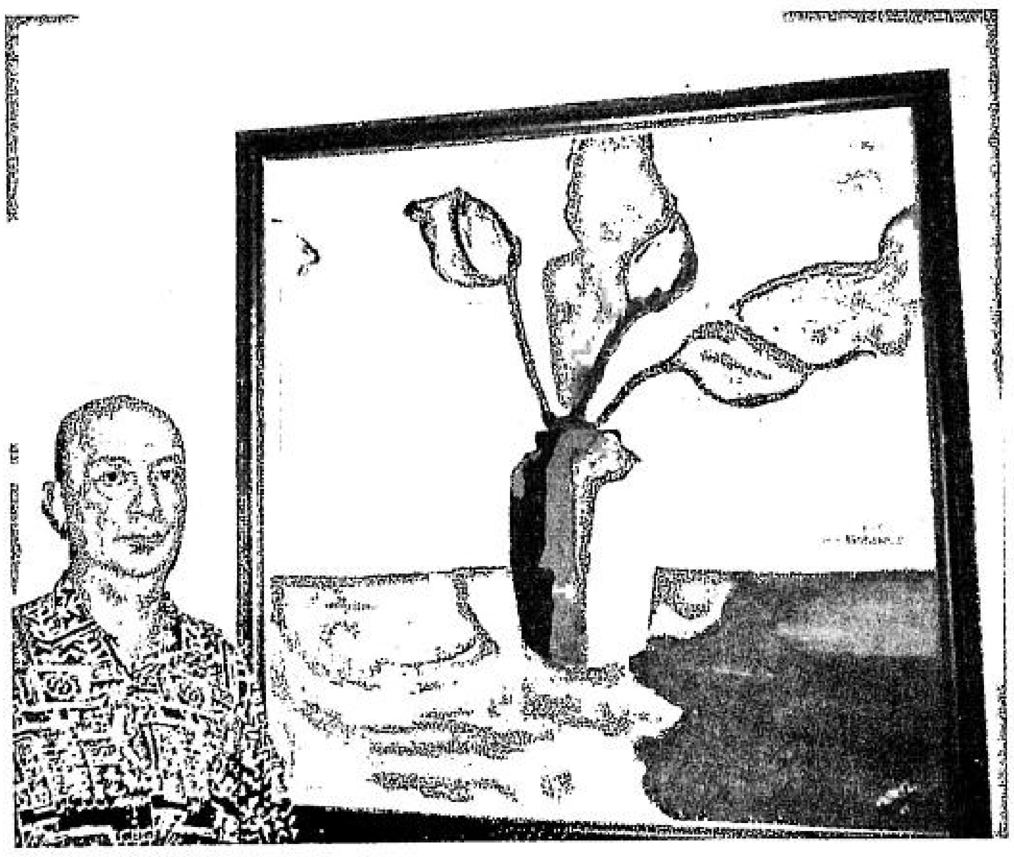
PALAZZO de Laoag owner Manuel Ablan, the artist Kairuz, provincial board member Purisima Bueno, Fr. Danny Lucas and the author during the opening of the first ever art gallery in Laoag City



LAOAG artist Miguel Kairuz

The Manila-Laoag art connection

Filipino-Lebanese Miguel Kairuz spices up the visual arts scene in Northern Luzon

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

A SEASON fervently devoted to fiestas and festivals, May is a glorious time for the adventurous to hie off to some faraway destination and soak one's heat-battered body in the reinvigorating country air.

Thus, because of an invitation, I decided with no hesitation to take on a grueling 10-hour trip that would take me, through the unfolding vistas of the countryside now dotted with burgeoning fast-food chains and ubiquitous banks, to the heart of the Ilocos region, into the belly of the land the Marcoses, the Fariñases and the Ablans have uninterruptedly ruled for generations now.

The invitation was not for any purpose other than to see for myself the first ever art gallery to sprout in the city of Laoag, a booming Class 1 capital (population: 100,000) that has, sadly, been left behind in the arts and cultural arena.

It is rather simply called The Gallery, a hole-in-the-wall section of the Palazzo de Laoag, a hotel seemingly inspired by turn-of-the-century colonial houses, and owned by Manuel Ablan, an entrepreneur who, like his persevering forebears, has a business acumen that is resolute and knows how to take risks.

The artist whose show (with guest artist from Vigan, Rodel Dayaoan) formally opened the hotel's gallery is Miguel Kairuz, of Filipino-Lebanese descent, who presently resides in Laoag, his mother's birthplace. His wife, Angelita nee Parado, is from Dingras, Ilocos Norte. They have three children, all girls.

The family lives in a suburban home located on a sprawling lot right beside the city's international airport.

It was here where the couple hosted an intimate party for me and other guests, a multinational cast: a Bahrain national doing business in Laoag; a Singaporean couple who built a school in the city; an Australian-Filipino who goes by the name of Michael Keon (remember him?), who now works as sports trainer with Gov. Bongbong Marcos, his first cousin.

Self-taught

Kairuz, who is mainly self-taught, admits to having been mentored by the late Larry Tronco when he was nine years old. He later wanted to take up fine arts but was prevailed upon by his mother, who did not see a bright future for her son as an artist.

Sometime in the 1990s, Kairuz decided to try his luck in the US, where his early love for art was rekindled. Then based in Los Angeles, California, he joined another Pinoy expat artist, Neil Dorval, and exhibited at Canoga Park in California.

After seven years abroad, Kairuz rejoined his family here and worked more feverishly on his art, exhibiting his works in the most unlikely places, like the Spice Jam Café, frequented by Laoag's more affluent set. He also had a show at the Ilocos Museum, where he exhibited works on Ilocano culture.

Last year, feeling there was no more room for art in the city, he decided to visit his two sisters married to the Montinolas and Locsins in Silay and Bacolod. There he ended up having a solo show at the Bernardino Jalandoni House, a sellout.

Kairuz works on a variety of subjects, mostly illustrations in pen and colored pencil, of old houses and customs, which uncannily resemble textbook illustration renderings.

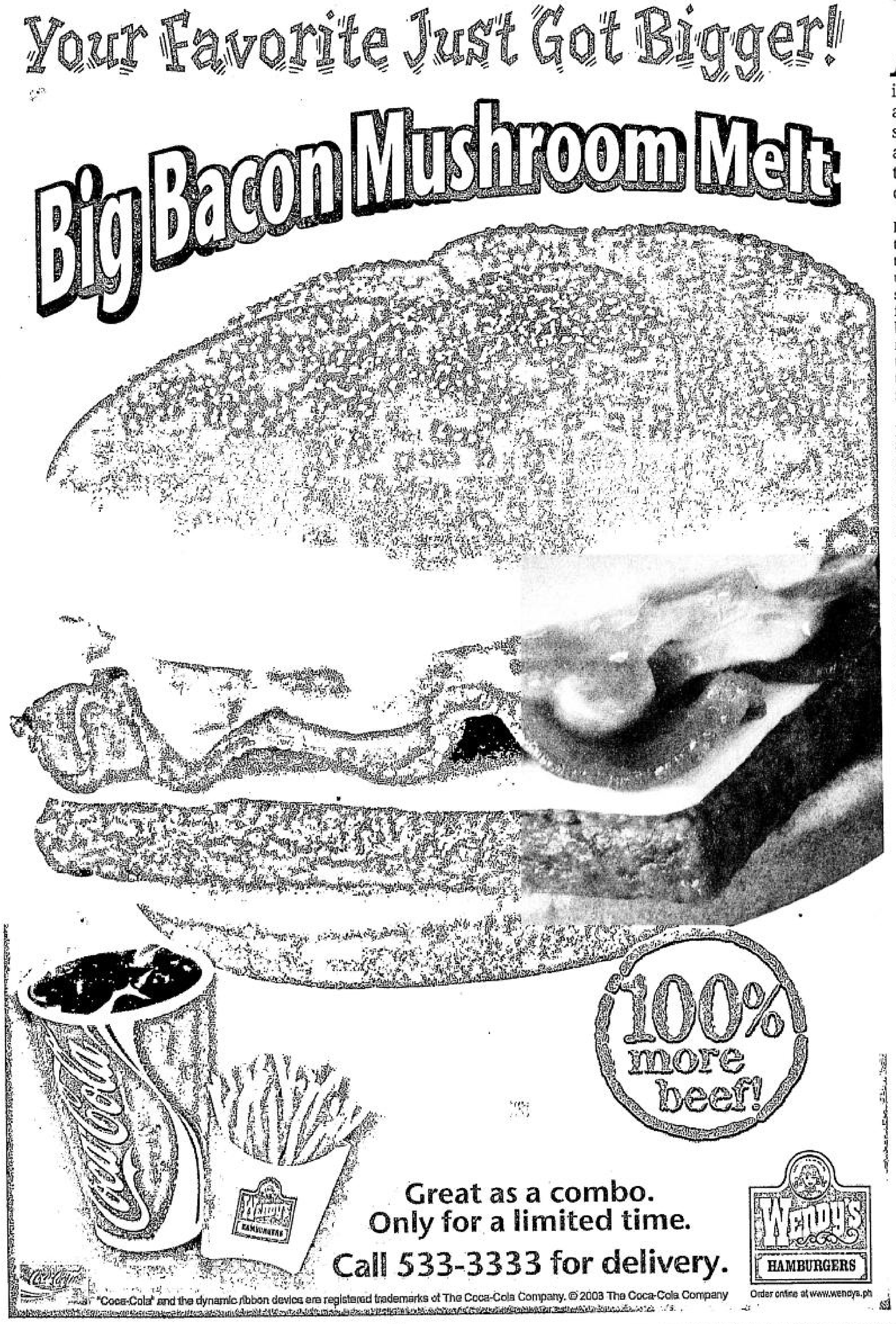
However, when he turns to abstraction, and using the subject of still life, his style becomes altogether inspired, dynamic and vibrant.

The works are thus of two totally different modes, which show Kairuz' strength and limitations as painter.

Having shown me his Cezanne-like still lifes of flowers, Kairuz admits he is now doing more experimental pieces in the abstract style, sort of combining the old and the new, by way of subject (vanishing culture) and style (rendered in a more modern and expressionistic mode).

In many ways, Miguel Kairuz represents the breed of emerging regional artists who are at the crossroads—looking for their identity while waging their personal battles in finding their rightful place in society and an appreciative audience in a place that has known prosperity but still has to concomitantly grow in the arts and culture.

E-mail author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com



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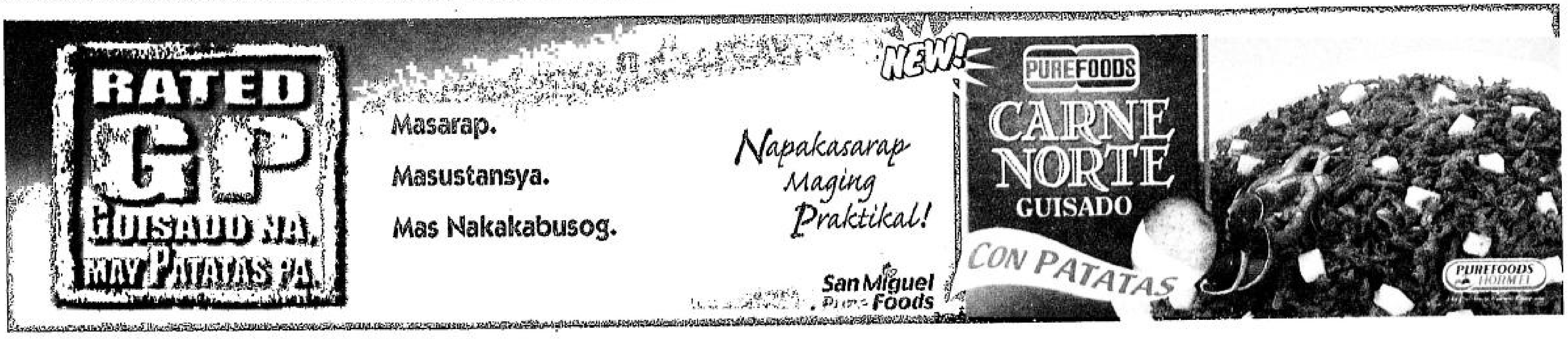

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New Cecile Licad album named CD of the Month

A London music Internet site heaps praises on the CD, saying that Licad's performance 'blazes new horizons'

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

CECILE Licad, who observed her 42nd birthday quietly last May 11 in her Manhattan apartment, became again a recent music newsmaker in New York and London.

THE PIANIST

In New York, Licad's rendition of Ravel's Concerto in G, with the Buffalo Orchestra got a standing ovation. In London, her latest recording of the works of American composer Louies Moreau Gottschalk was chosen CD of the Month by the Music Web, an Internet site.

A rave review of Licad's all-Gottschalk recording also branded as inferior the earlier recordings of the same pieces by pianists Alan Marks and Philip Martin.

Wrote Music Web reviewer Don Satz: "Licad offers us a pulsating set of performances flowing with life's vital juices. Additional listening to Alan Marks only reveals the limitations of his interpretations. Although they are attractive upon initial hearing, the even-flowing rhythms and charm eventually become routine and uninteresting. Licad is adventurous and daring while listening to Marks is analogous to relaxing on the back patio and sipping a glass of Southern Comfort. Licad blazes new horizons; Marks simply manages the gains made in the past."

The last recording of Licad, an all-Ravel CD, was declared CD of the Month in London by Classical CD Magazine. It consisted of the French works Le Tombeau de couperin, Gaspard de la nuit and Sonatine under the Music Master label.

Licad's earlier recording of Schumann's Carnival, Papillions and Toccata was also declared CD of the Month by Time Magazine.

It will be remembered that her debut recording of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor and Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini with the Chicago Symphony under Claudio Abbado in the early mid-'80s reached the top of the Billboard charts.

Another Billboard top choice was her recording of Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2 in F Minor with Andre Previn conducting the London Philharmonic, which won the Grand Prix du Disque Frederic Chopin from Poland's Chopin specialists.

Among the pieces singled out by Music Web as superbly interpreted were Le Banjo, Bamboula, La Savane, the Dying Poet and The Union.

Strength and energy

The rave review noticed Licad's tremendous strength, concentration and energy and her great rhythmic bounce.

However, the critic also observed the pianist's ability to vary her approach depending on the piece. "La scintilla is a lovely mazurka that flows like a silk and will recall the mazurkas of Chopin," notes Music Web. "Licad's reading is very warm and comforting as she eschews her generally sharp approach to Gottschalk. This tells me that she makes adjustments when appropriate: one of the signs of an exceptional performing artist."

How a Filipina was able to sink deep into the psyche of an American composer amazes the critic who heartily recommends Licad's Gottschalk piano recordings.

The critic admits none of the composer's works are essential listening from a purely musical perspective, but qualifies that there is greater reward awaiting those who listen to Licad's latest recording: "Anyone wanting to gain insight into the national psychology of the United States in its first hundred years of existence will be highly rewarded."

Licad's all-Gottschalk CD was recorded at the Auditorium de la Banque de Luxem-

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Concerto tour set conquest of Luzon

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

THE ROMANTIC piano concerto tour of pianists Ingrid Sala Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes continues in June, this time around Central Luzon and some universities in Metro Manila.

Started in 2001, the journey is the sixth undertaking of the formidable duo. To date, the tour has played some of the best-scored romantic concertos in 58 performances in 40 cities around the country.

Santamaria and Reyes have also been heard by thousands of listeners and watched nationwide by millions on national television over NBN Channel 4.

The journey is slated to begin on Independence Day, June 12, and end on June 30; by that time, 29 concerts will have been played.

The tour kicks off at the San Sebastian Church in San Narciso, Zambales. It proceeds to the town of Castillejos, then to Subic, Bataan, Pampanga, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan and Metro Manila.

The San Narciso affair is upon the invitation of Dr. Jon Fontillas who, according to Fred Mendoza, the journey's manager, had heard much about the tour and now wants his town mates to experience the performance of seasoned pianists.

The invitation, Mr. Mendoza said, is touching since it proves that the people in the countryside indeed thirst for live classical performance.

The following day, the performance will move to Castillejos, a nearby town, under the auspices of Mayor Enrique Magsaysay. The concert, held in memory of the late President Ramon Magsaysay, will be held at the Magsaysay ancestral house. Understandably, Sen. Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr. is the honorary chairman of this 6th National Concert Tour.

In a press briefing at her residence, Santamaria briefed the media about the accomplishments of the journey.

It has so far been very successful, she said, with all performances playing to packed halls. The beauty of the journey, she said, is that it has an educational component. It is actually an "informance," where pianist Reyes informs the listeners about what the concerto is in general, and specifically the concerto to be played. This is done before the performance and greatly enhances the appreciation of the listeners who, having been properly oriented, listen with great enthusiasm.

After the performance, members of the audience ask questions, raise clarifications or plain curiosities.

Rapport

Rapport is achieved not only during the actual performance but more so during the open forum.

"When it is over, Rey and I are happy we have touched so many listeners hearts, and inspire would-be pianists with such a burning enthusiasm," Santamaria said.

She recounted the challenges Reyes and she had encountered. Consider, for instance, the ordeal of bringing along two parlor grand pianos, and of course a tuner.

A tuner is a must, she stressed, as in the heat of the travel, a key may snap out. The piano's sound may also be impaired in the process of loading and unloading.

Both pianists are careful too with their touch during a performance especially when they notice that a key is about to give up. It cannot simply disintegrate, as it would affect greatly the performance, Santamaria said.

After a performance, they had to rush to the next, at times eating packed meals on the van, as was what happened last year, after a performance in Dagupan, Pangasinan. There was no time to dilly-dally, as they had to keep their engagement the following day. With a brief stopover in Manila for dinner, the duo was on the road again for Bicol where the people of Naga and Legazpi were excitedly waiting to hear them. After their performance in Legazpi the following day, they were on the road again for their commitment in Manila. Arriving at 9 the following morning, they had to be at the Supreme Court at 3 p.m. and, just before dusk, at the Concert in the Park in Luneta.

Indeed, traveling with the pianos is indispensable. At one time Santamaria asked Reyes if he had performed in Alitagtag, Batangas, his hometown; she was surprised to hear him replying negatively: There was no workable grand piano in town that he could run his fingers on. And yet the world had marveled at his virtuosity. But his town mates had yet to see for themselves.

Learning about this, Ingrid included Alitagtag in the journey. After the journey, she was glad that his collaborating pianist had finally been heard by his town mates.

The concertos in their list include the works of Beethoven, Grieg, Rachmaninoff, Saint-Saens, Schumann and Tchaikovsky.

Reynaldo Reyes and Ingrid Santamaria team up again to bring classical music to the provinces

In between, they play Philippine compositions by Abelardo, Buencamino, Cayabyab and Santiago to provide a local touch.

It will be recalled that in 1991, Ingrid had spearheaded the formation of the Cebu Youth Symphony Orchestra (CYSO) in Cebu City, following a 10-year development plan.

By the year 2000, the orchestra was formed and was designated the national orchestra in Southern Philippines and renamed the Peace Philippine Philharmonic (PPP).

Being the moving spirit behind the PPP, Ingrid is no stranger to outreach performance and developing audience at the grass roots. Appreciation of classical music in the countryside is a must, if one truly believes in the democratization of the performing arts.

It is this commitment shared by his foremost mentor, Prof. Reynaldo Reyes, that has moved her to undertake this endeavor—a musical journey committed to life itself, dictated by the purest gesture of sharing the joys of music, that makes life throb to the fullest.

The journey is made possible by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts; Department of Tourism; Department of the Interior and Local Government; Petron Corporation; Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation; Development Bank of the Philippines; Land Bank of the Philippines; Metrobank Foundation; Manila Bulletin; Philippine Daily Inquirer; Carepak Moving and Storage; and DZFE 98.7, the Master's Touch.

Albert Tiu's love and life of music

Set to play with the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra, the pianist will soon become a faculty in Singapore

By Grace Shangkuan Koo
Contributor

SAN MIGUEL Philharmonic Orchestra (SMPO) in its first commercial concert on June 14 will present Beethoven's Third Symphony "Erotica" at the CCP Main Theater.

The program, under the baton of SMPO's director, Julian Quirit, will start at 8 p.m. with Rimsky-Korsakov's Capriccio Espagnol. Cebu-born pianist and recipient of the 1998 Julliard William Petschek Recital Award, Albert Tiu will play Edvard Grieg's Piano Concerto in A minor. Albert was also the SMPO's guest soloist in November 2002 when it performed Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto to a full-house audience.

As a child, Tiu was sent to learn piano as "a diversion to my inclination for mischief," he said.

For his parents, music was not a good career. It helped them that Albert did not have any musical ambitions—until he turned 11 and he entered the Philippine High School for the Arts in Mt. Makiling.

After four years at the UP College of Music, Albert was admitted to Julliard's Master of Music program. Living in New York for eight years, he believes the rich artistic environment had a great influence on his development. Previously, he also studied at the Boston Conservatory and the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts.

Playing was one thing, practicing, another. It took him nearly 28 years of playing before he fully enjoyed the discipline. "Playing the piano requires a lot of discipline, but what's really tricky is how to bridge the gap between discipline and freedom. After all, every aspiring pianist nowadays is possessed with amazing digital dexterity, so what separates the men from the boys will be the infinite shades of black and white that one has in his arsenal."

Are musicians born or made? "Music is not a field in which you can simply pass on your knowledge and expertise—like shoe-making. Music is both and a product of the environment. There are some musicians who are absolute natural geniuses at what they do, but for some of us, things don't come so easily. But I think it's precisely this struggle that provides the inspiration for sublime music making."

Albert practices at least two hours a day, extending it to three or four hours when there's a concert and six hours to prepare for competitions. "A good performance is when one is able to do what he has set out to do, with unequivocal conviction, regardless of what the audience thinks, and to be in total control of the situation at all times."

"In this day and age where image is everything, I find it a little disturbing that Anna Kournikova is the most famous female tennis star when she has not even won a single tournament. The same phenomenon applies to classical music where being an attractive young female is the sure ticket to superstardom."

Albert considers highlights in his career in this order: winning first prize in the Pretoria competition, playing with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic in Russia, and meeting the Sultan of Perak, then King of Malaysia, who attended his concerts in Ipoh.

Married to Susan, a piano graduate of Royal Academy of London, and father to four-year-old Alexander, Albert will start teaching at Singapore Conservatory of Music in July 2003. To unwind and take off the pressure of concretizing, Albert assembles gigantic jigsaw puzzles, watches hockey, and listens to jazz.

"Classical music could be most unrewarding and ungrateful, because you give so much of yourself to it, and yet you get very little in return. And I'm not referring to financial rewards alone. So, every morning, I ask myself, "Why do I keep doing this?" And the answer is simple: "Because I love what I do."

Albert Tiu's new CDs—"Salamisim" released by Bookmark and "Variations" released by Arktos, Canada—are out in the market.

E-mail the author at grace@koo.org

Theater workshop presents historical play, musical

GANTIMPALA Theater Foundation (GTF), in cooperation with the National Parks Development Committee (NPDC), presents its Summer Theater Workshop Culminating Recital at 4 p.m., May 30 (Children's Theater Class) and at 6 p.m., May 31, (Basic Acting for Teens and Young Adults Class).

Both recitals are at the Concert at the Park Auditorium, Luneta, Manila.

The Children's Class recital features "Magellan and His Guide," loosely adapted by Adriana Agcaoili from an original play by Amado Lacuesta, Jr. It is about Magellan's re-discovery of the Philippines told from the point of view of Enrique, his guide. Agcaoili also directs.

The cast includes Robert Miguel Gavina as Enrique, Joaquin Guevara as Magellan, Ken Joseph Roperez as Lapu-Lapu. Stage manager is Avie de Arise.

For the Basic Acting for Teens and Young Adults recital, the class will present "Katy!", a musical loosely adapted by Waya Gallardo. Original libretto is by Jose Javier Reyes while music is by Ryan Cayabyab.

The musical is about the life, love and music of Katy dela Cruz, one of the most important entertainers of the vaudeville era. Cast includes Gallardo as Katy, China Cojuangco as Olivia, Joel Molina as Peping. Stage managers are Christopher David and Yutaka Yamakawa Jr. Roobak Valle directs.

The annual GTF Summer Theater workshop teaches the basics of theater as an artistic expression. GTF president and artistic director is Tony Espejo. Workshop facilitators this year are Bodjie Pascua, Adriana Agcaoili and Valle. Production manager is Dell Cayetano.

Call 528-0603 or 0918-9212866.

GANTIMPALA workshop fellows

New Cecile Licad album . . .

From page F1

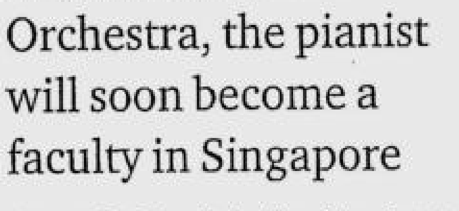
bourg where she often performs in recitals.

Licad was last heard in Manila and Cagayan last year where one of her encores was Gottschak's The Banjo which drew tumultuous cheers.

In one recital in New York last year on the first anniversary of the fall of the New York's Twin Towers, Licad played Gottschalk's The Union for finale and flag-waving Americans reduced to tears cheered her backstage.

Concluded Music Web Don Satz: "Cecile Licad is now my standard for future Gottschalk recordings. Her exuberance and rhythmic vitality places her in an exalted position. Licad's program is also a winning one, well mixing the excitement and poignancy of Gottschalk compositions."

Cecille Licad will be heard in homecoming performances at the Philamlife Theater on Aug. 16 and 20 and special performances in Davao City, Tuguegarao City and Bacolod City. Inquiries on Licad's latest recording may be directed to website: amazon.co.uk or amazon.com. For her Manila and provincial engagements, call 0918-7376901.



ALBUM cover of Licad's last recording, which was also highly praised in London

Dulaang UP presents Chekhov's 'Three Sisters'

DULAANG UP is mounting Anton Chekhov's "Three Sisters" at the Teatro Hermogenes Ylagan, Bulwagang Rizal, UP Diliman, Quezon City, from June 25 to July 13.

The play, directed by Dr. Anton Juan and featuring a cast of notable stage, film and television actors such as Frances Makil-Ignacio, Tommy Abuel and Paolo Fabregas, is presented in cooperation with the Office for Initiatives in Culture and the Arts.

"Three Sisters" depicts posh life in a small provincial town outside of Moscow. Olga, Masha and Irina Prozorov, along with their brother, Andrei, are trying to come to terms with the rising lower class and the decline of their own affluent status. Living monotonous lives, their only diversion is the distraction offered by the group of soldiers staying in their home, and the hope of moving to Moscow one day.

Olga, the eldest, is a high school teacher who desperately holds on to erstwhile bourgeois values as she struggles against change. Masha, married to the pedantic school master Kulygin, begins an illicit love affair with the philosophical Colonel Vershinin, who, however, is married and cannot run away with her. Irina, the youngest, seeks adventure by getting engaged to Baron Tuzenbakh, another officer, who eventually dies in battle. Meanwhile, their brother Andrei, who has ambitions of becoming a professor, succumbs to gambling, ruining his marriage to Natalya and thwarting his own dreams.

In the end, the three sisters are left still holding on to their dreams of a better life.

Call Dulaang UP at 926-1349 or Lea Remulla at 0917-5339465, or e-mail dulaangup_28@yahoo.com.

They shoot people on horses, don't they?

Or let me tell you about 'The Last Five Years'

By Bart Guingona
Contributor

OF STAGE

THESE days it is easier for me to look people in the eye when I have to answer to the question, "What are you busy with?" Just a few months ago, I would have had to answer "politics" and brave the eyeball rolling or the stifled gasp or the condescending smirk. I would have had to add quickly, "No, it's not what you think. I am not involved with partisan politics. I am with a group called pagbabago@pilipinas, which is staunchly non-partisan, and staunchly reformist (I prefer to be 'revolutionary' but my colleagues in the movement would probably engage me in a drawn-out academic and ultimately useless argument.)"

Actor's Actors Inc. (AAI) has been on hiatus for a few months now. What can I say? Every time I've had to struggle to understand the depth of this country's maladroitness with the "global" challenge, and by association with cultural and aesthetic sophistication, I tend to become reductionist.

Come to think of it, isn't that what we artists are appointed to do anyway? Reduce reality into digestible chunks of truth?

So, for the past few months it's been down to the following analysis:

Q: Why are there so many stupid forms of entertainment proliferating?

A: Because they sell.

Q: But why do they sell?

A: Because people are uncritically escapist.

Q: Why are they that way?

A: Because their education and exposure does not equip them to be any better.

Q: Why is the quality of education the way it is?

A: Hello! Have you seen where our good teachers go? They make the best domestic helpers abroad! It's economics, stupid!

Q: Why is the economy the way it is?

A: Incompetent and/or corrupt governance.

I figured after this admittedly simplistic analysis, that no matter how depressing it was, if I even dream of a long-term future for my vocation, the theater, beyond the stages of high school and elementary auditoria, I had no right to cocoon myself within the comforts of rehearsal halls.

So, like a stuntman on a suicide run, I have quixotically jumped from one horse running full-speed toward "art" atop another wayward steed, one that is unsteadily galloping toward "politics." So shoot me.

Unleavable

But, you can't leave the theater and be gone for long. Not if you've been fatally infected by the SARS-like theater bug.

When Menchu Lauchengo-Yulo (who is only the country's greatest musical-theater actress today) told me that she was celebrating her "silver" year in the theater, I was amazed. Not only does she look incredibly young and beautiful (the one woman I know who actually ages backward), but also at the top of the heap, artistically—and almost entirely unknown to most people outside of theater circles.

What a shame that this world-class talent (who reportedly outshone a Tony Award-winning actress when they shared the stage—hey, I told you to shoot me before!) is not the much-bigger star she deserves to be.

Menchu also happens to be one of the founders of AAI; so I decided to go in search of a project, a show that might showcase her prowess and at the same time celebrate her contributions to theater in this country.

In my search for material, my friend-producer from Cebu, Hendri Go, tossed a CD to me of what I think is possibly the most devastatingly romantic (or romantically devastating, whichever way you choose to see it) musical I had heard in years.

Intelligent, funny, bittersweet and utterly clever, "The Last Five Years" by Jason Robert Brown tells the story of a failed marriage from two viewpoints: the husband's and the wife's (duh, obviously). But while the wife's story unfolds from the day of the breakup backwards to the first date, the husband tells his story from the first date to the end of the relationship. The only time they ever really get to cross paths is at the center of the dual narratives, when they get married. What might seem like clever gimmickry actually illuminates the story in ways that are surprisingly revealing and gut-wrenching.

Audie Gemora

I excitedly applied for the rights in New York, researched about the show (it had a limited New York run and won widespread acclaim as well as a few awards), and set my eyes on another "silver jubilarian" of the theater—Audie Gemora. After he heard the music, he was on board. Great, a double celebration!

I then approached producer Lisa Bañares. She listened to the music, she was on board.

I watched Audie and Menchu read the libretto on the first day of rehearsals. These were people I truly admired. I can't claim to have been in the theater as long as either of them has been (if you must know, they started when they were kids,—they're not as old as "silver" might suggest). These two people have each spent a lifetime fighting to get theater taken seriously where people still say, "*Ay di ba gumaganap ka sa i*-stage play?" Stage play. Nothing is more grating to my ears than that. Just goes to show you that "cheter" (theater) is still largely misunderstood, under-utilized and poorly appreciated.

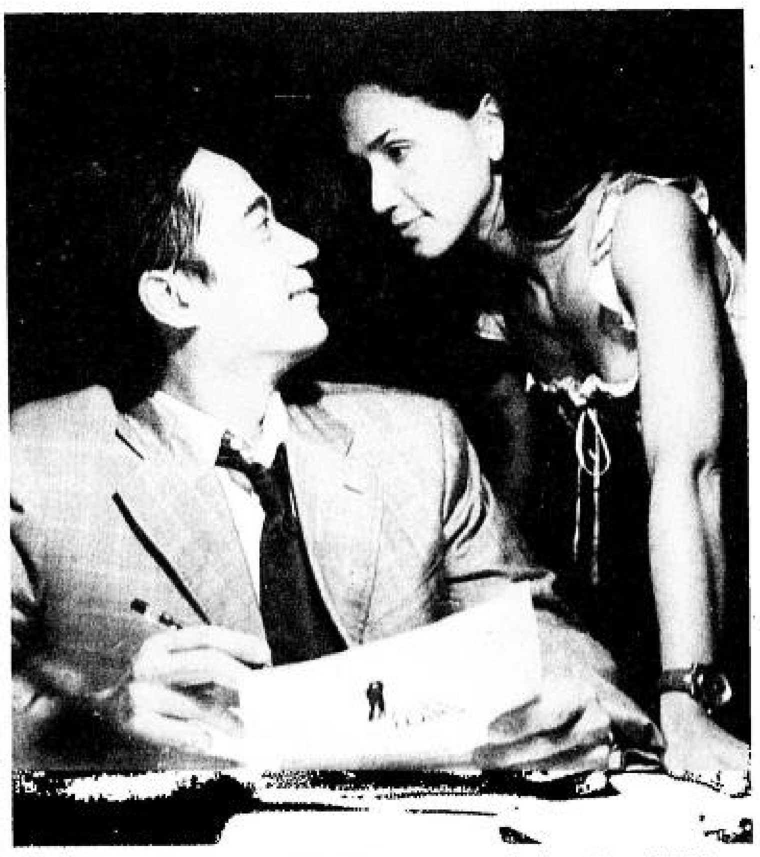
So, I'm listening to these two stalwarts singing their guts out at the first rehearsal of "The Last Five Years," and in spite of people like the Filipino co-producer of "Miss Saigon" grandly proclaiming in a press conference that the Philippines was about to see real theater when that show came in; in spite of all the pressures for us to bend to the unwritten rules proclaimed by the gods of commerce or else face extinction; despite the near-desperate circumstances of the cultural scene in this country, and in spite of all that is dismal and disgusting with the country's politics, listening to them, Audie and Menchu, I am swamped with the familiar comfort one must feel when one's butt sinks into a sofa that's been contoured by time and use.

Here we are, in the comfort zone of what we do best: discussing a play. About a breakup. About politics between the sexes. About politics. What can I say?

And then this visual pops up in my head of a stuntman astride two horses galloping at full speed to I-don't-know-where. There's no escaping politics either. Sigh.

"The Last Five Years" is scheduled for a limited engagement in August and September at the RCBC Plaza and is now inviting sponsorship and ticketing proposals. Call AAI at 536-5844 or e-mail at actorsactorsinc@broline.com

MENCHU Lauchengco-Yulo and Audie Gemora play a couple whose marriage is disintegrating in Actor's Actors Inc.'s newest production.



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R&B wonder Nina invades Boracay

NINA, Warner Music Philippines recording star and the voice behind the gold record album "Nina Heaven" (which includes the hit songs "Jealous" and "Foolish Heart"), will invade Boracay shores in "Nina: Stars, Strings and Sand," a night of acoustic music and R & B beats on May 31 at the Boracay Terraces Resort.

For bookings, contact 636-1050, 687-7155, or (0916) 659-0585 or e-mail us at islands7107@lycos.com.

"Nina: Stars, Strings and Sand" is sponsored by C Interactive, Panay News, Daily Headlines, and Joey 92.3 FM.

The show is organized by the 7107 Islands Travellers' Club and Global Events Synergy.

NINA

MCO presents young classical artists

FOR ITS Young Artists Series 2003, the Manila Chamber Orchestra (MCO) Foundation is presenting Angela Rose E. Calimon in a solo violin recital, with collaborating artist Jonathan Arevalo Coo (pianist), on June 8, 3 p.m. at the Francisco Santiago Hall, Equitable PCI Bank Tower I, Makati Avenue corner H.V. dela Costa Street, Makati City.

Calimon will perform pieces by Bach, Mozart, Wieniawski, Kasilag and Conus.

A two-time prize winner of the National Music Competition for Young Artists (Namcya), Calimon graduated salutatorian at the Philippine High School for the Arts and is now studying at the Catholic University of America.

Coo is a Namcya gold medalist, and completed further studies at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York with a Master's degree in Performance and Literature and a Performer's Certificate.

Call 818-1403 or 840-7000 locals 2630 or 2258.

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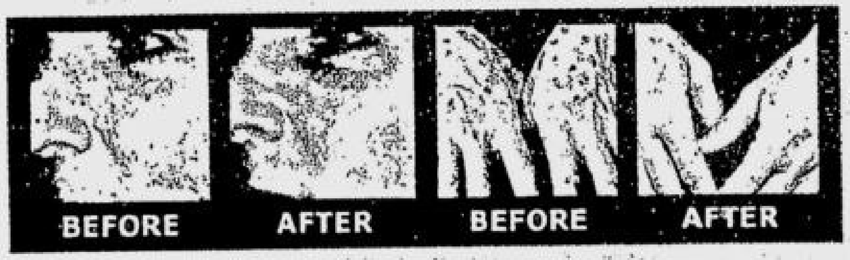

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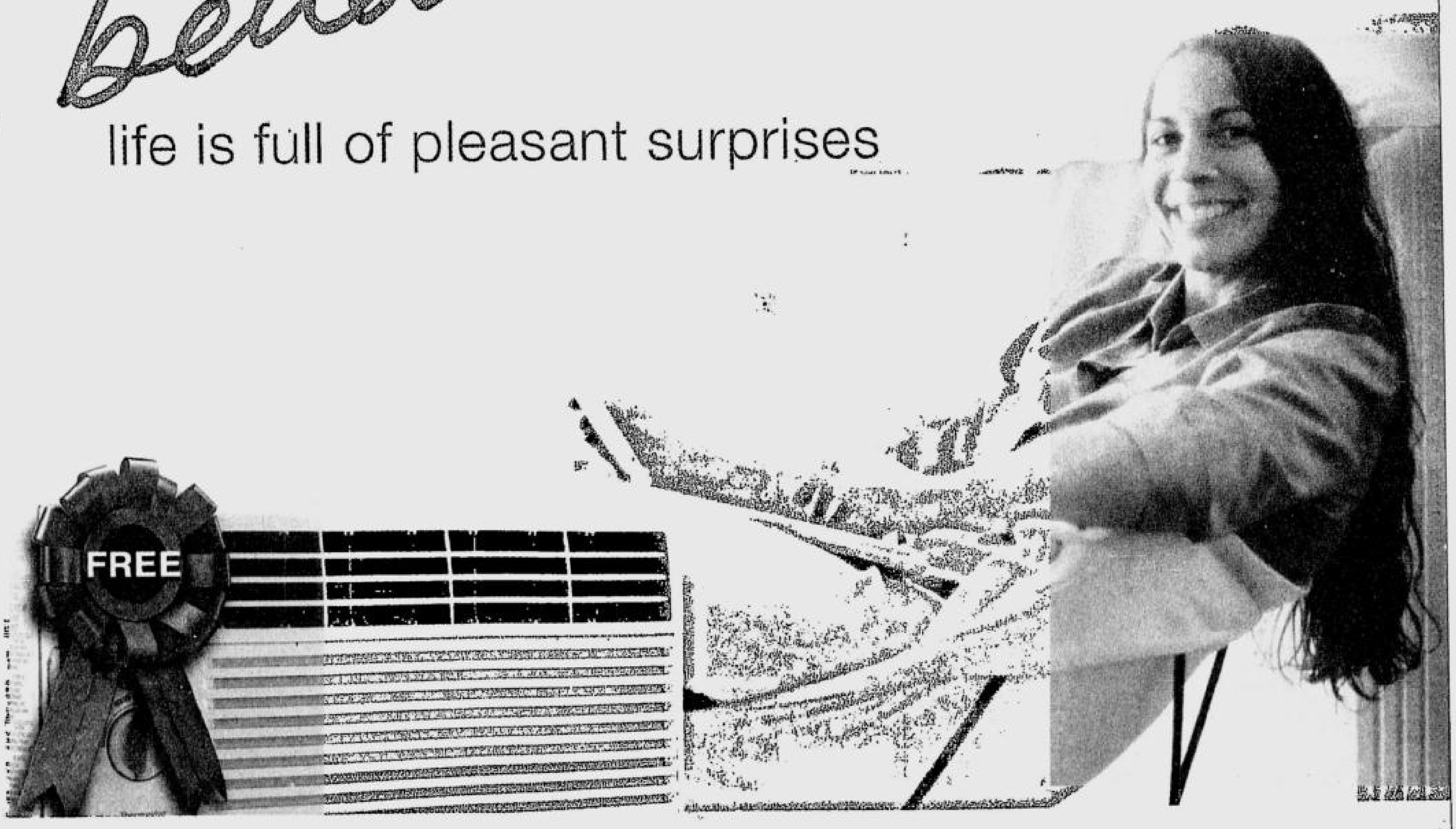

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By Menchu Aquino Sarmiento
Anvil Publishing, 2003, 186 pages

By Amadís Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

THE STORIES of Menchu Aquino Sarmiento begin quietly, almost prosaically, like a locomotive gathering steam and then, as the author digs deeper into her characters, the narrative hurtles forward full speed ahead to a conclusion which is open-ended, unexpected, or in-your-face.

DARK/ G4

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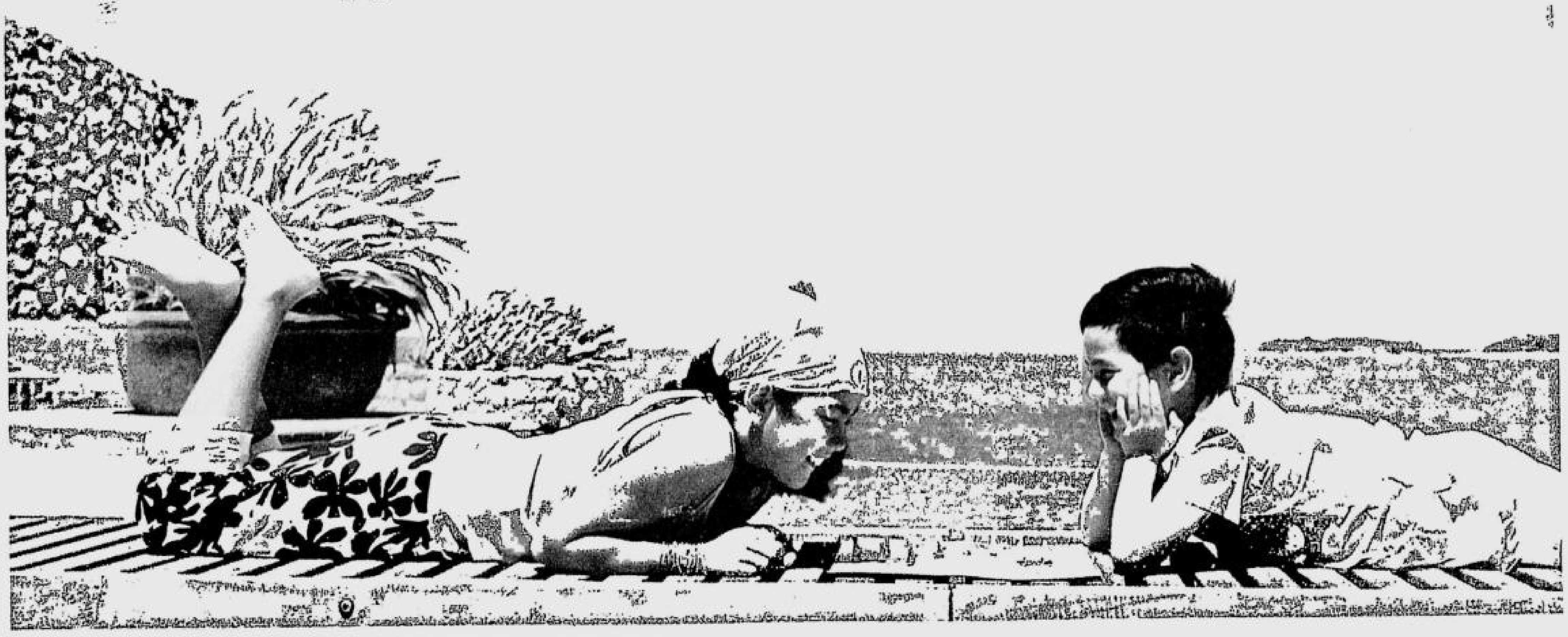
Life's happiest moments happen around a body of water.



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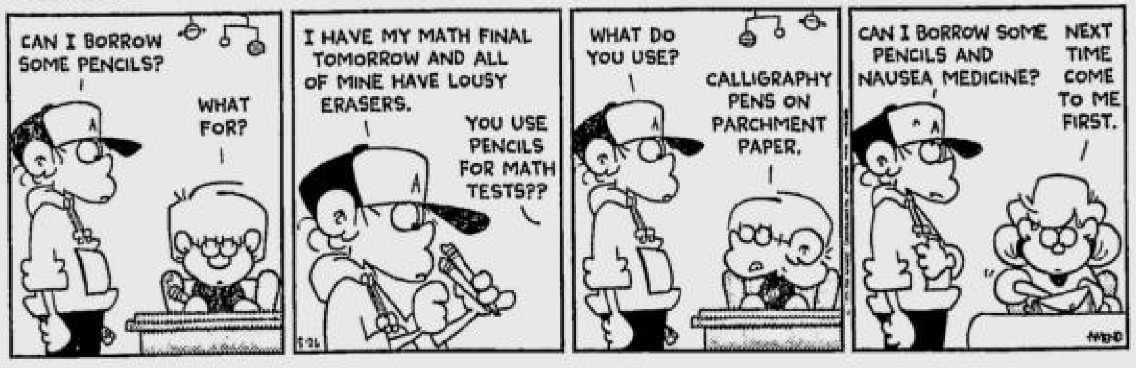
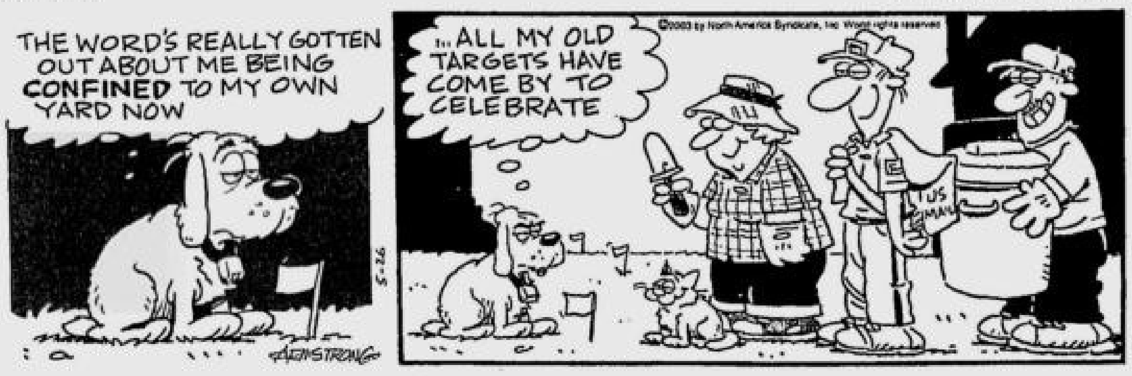

CAN I BORROW SOME PENCILS?
WHAT FOR?
I HAVE MY MATH FINAL TOMORROW AND ALL OF MINE HAVE LOUSY ERASERS.
YOU USE PENCILS FOR MATH TESTS??
WHAT DO YOU USE?
CALLIGRAPHY PENS ON PARCHMENT PAPER.
CAN I BORROW SOME PENCILS AND NAUSEA MEDICINE?
NEXT TIME COME TO ME FIRST.

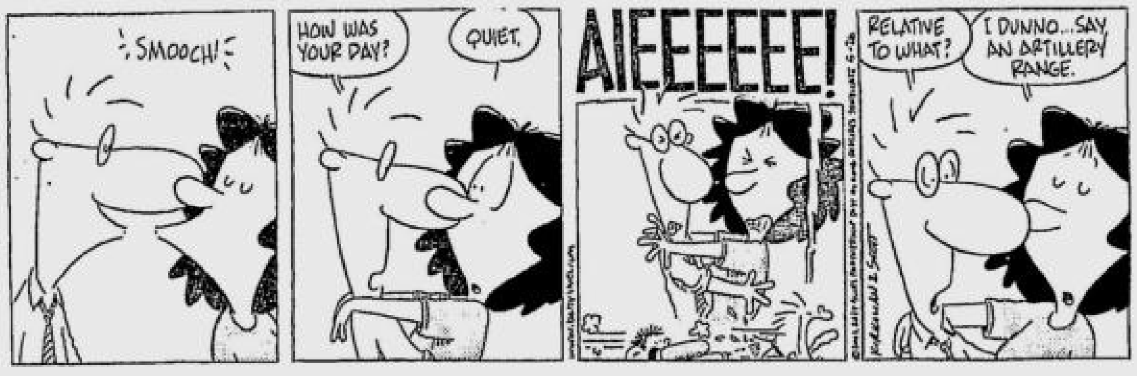
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


THE WORD'S REALLY GOTTEN OUT ABOUT ME BEING CONFINED TO MY OWN YARD NOW
...ALL MY OLD TARGETS HAVE COME BY TO CELEBRATE
US MAIL

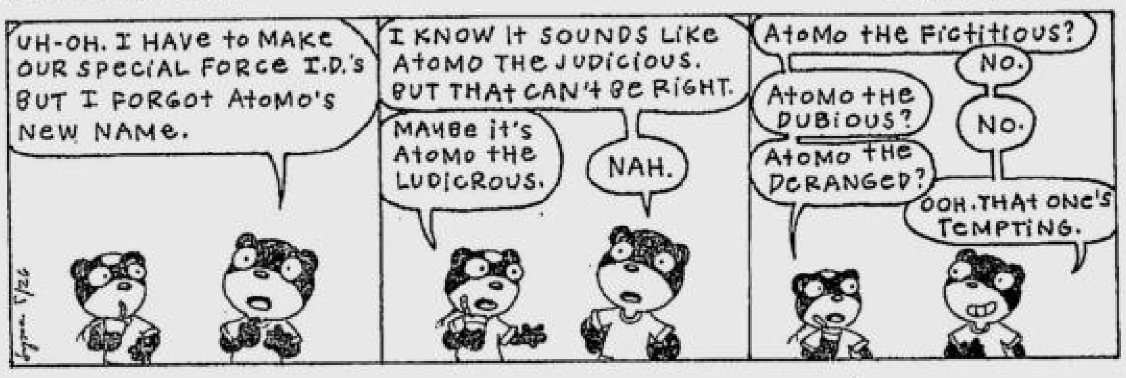
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


SMOOCH!
HOW WAS YOUR DAY?
QUIET.
AIEEEEEE!
RELATIVE TO WHAT?
I DUNNO...SAY, AN ARTILLERY RANGE.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


UH-OH. I HAVE TO MAKE OUR SPECIAL FORCE I.D.'S BUT I FORGOT ATOMO'S NEW NAME.
I KNOW IT SOUNDS LIKE ATOMO THE JUDICIOUS. BUT THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT.
MAYBE IT'S ATOMO THE LUDICROUS.
NAH.
ATOMO THE FICTITIOUS?
NO.
ATOMO THE DUBIOUS?
NO.
ATOMO THE DERANGED?
OOH. THAT ONE'S TEMPTING.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are impulsive and spontaneous. Nevertheless, you always take the moral high ground. You have strong opinions about things and believe in upholding tradition. You are protective and nurturing to those you care about. You will let go of many things this year in order to make room for something new in the future.
Birthdate of: Stevie Nicks, singer; Peggy Lee, singer; John Wayne, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a good day for your sign to make money. At the very least, you can definitely do something to bring you value. Plus, the Moon in Aries brings you good luck!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): The words you speak to others today are sweet and soothing. You can charm the birds off the trees. This is an excellent day to patch up quarrels with loved ones and friends.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Meditation and retrospection will enormously benefit you. A good trick is to stop what you're doing, sit with closed eyes and count your breath 11 times. (An inhalation and exhalation is one count.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a wonderful day to enjoy conversations with friends. You find it easy to express affection for others. (People love to hear that they're loved.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Without even trying, you really impress important people today. You can't go wrong. You're in the right place at the right time, saying the right thing to the right person.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your appreciation of beauty is heightened today. You will enjoy literature, music, art, poetry, nature—whatever. Give yourself a chance to do this.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is the day to ask somebody who owes you money to cough it up. Somehow, you can benefit from the wealth of others right now. (Be bold!)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You feel genuine love in your heart for someone close to you today. Don't be afraid to express your affection. (And remember that actions speak louder than words.)

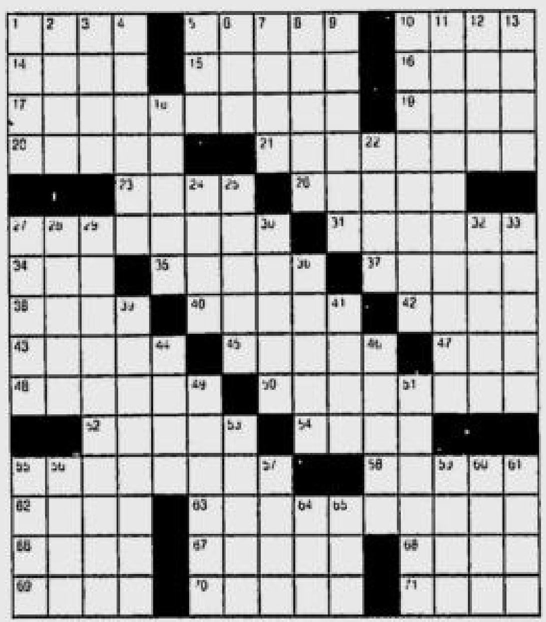
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): It's difficult to resist going overboard on sweets, desserts and candies today. (Follow Miss Piggy's advice: Never eat more than you can lift.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Try to set aside time to enjoy playful activities with children. If you're a parent, remember that their young years are gone before you know it!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): It's easy to promote feelings of love and affection among family members today. Never miss an opportunity to pass on a kind word or express friendly affection. Life is short (and fat).

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're in top form today! You can schmooze with the best of them. People enjoy your company and want to be in your presence.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

5/26/03

ACROSS
1 Israeli dance
5 Center
10 Govt. agent
14 College grad
15 Farewell to Pierre
16 Track event
17 Tennis decider
19 Lab burner
20 Provide with a trait
21 Hugger
23 Healing sign
26 Bridge hand
27 Auto-shop worker
31 Long-billed shore birds
34 Hockey great
35 Mexican moola
37 Derisive noise
38 Gateway
40 Courted
42 Actress Lollobrigida
43 Ford flop
45 Stair post
47 Diarist Anais
48 Agave drink
50 Sent payment
52 Sheep shelters
54 Irritate
55 Hubbub
58 Ire
62 Part of 55D
63 Tennis coup
66 Mine and thine
67 DeGeneres or Greene
68 Grow weary
69 __-noire
70 One-armed bandits
71 Kind of poker

DOWN
1 Detest
2 "Havana" star Lena
3 Regretted
4 Attack from hiding
5 West of filmdom
6 Actress/director Lupino
7 Raised causeway
8 Appears
9 Some sports cars
10 Dealing with
11 Crucial moment in tennis
12 Stridex target
13 Close
18 Story so far, briefly
22 Operates
24 Once more
25 American buffalo
27 PC communication device
28 Wear away
29 Certain tennis shot
30 Biller's partner?
32 South African golfer Els
33 Remain in effect
36 Municipal conduit
39 Ace in the hole
41 Moore of "Indecent Proposal"
44 Strip of a lattice
46 Pale purple color
49 Rental agreements
51 Doctrines
53 Beach find
55 Party letters
56 Bounder
57 Woody Guthrie's son
59 Particular way of walking
60 Beige
61 Marsh plant
64 VFW member
65 The ones elected

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

M	A	R	C	H	H	A	R	E	■	C	H	O	M	P
O	V	E	R	E	A	G	E	R	■	R	A	R	E	R
D	E	F	E	A	T	I	S	M	■	I	R	A	T	E
I	N	L	E	T	■	T	O	I	L	E	T	T	E	S
S	U	E	D	■	S	A	U	N	A	S	■	O	R	E
H	E	X	■	J	I	T	N	E	Y	■	E	R	I	N
■	■	■	H	E	R	O	D	■	■	F	L	I	N	T
O	R	D	E	R	E	R	■	E	P	I	L	O	G	S
S	H	R	E	K	■	■	A	N	I	T	A	■	■	■
S	O	U	P	■	H	O	R	S	E	S	■	S	O	Y
O	D	D	■	P	U	R	G	E	S	■	F	A	C	E
B	E	G	P	A	R	D	O	N	■	J	U	N	T	A
U	S	E	U	P	■	A	N	A	C	O	N	D	A	S
C	I	R	C	A	■	I	N	D	U	L	G	E	N	T
O	A	S	E	S	■	N	E	A	P	T	I	D	E	S

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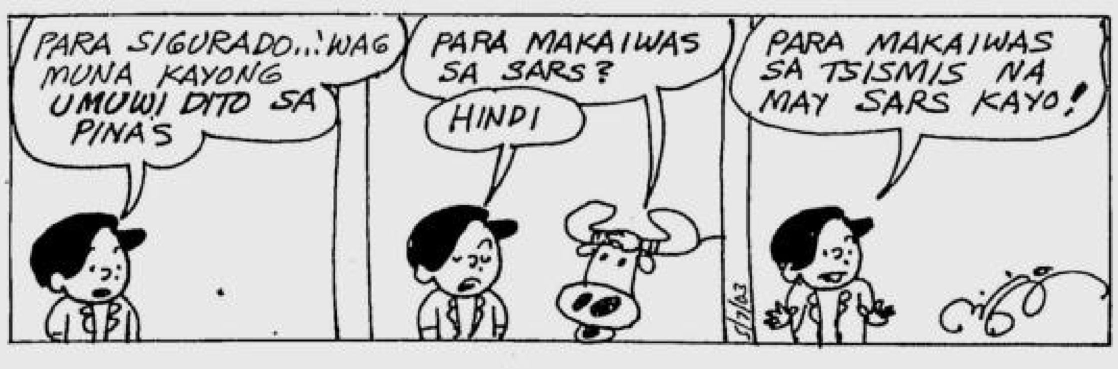
5/25/03

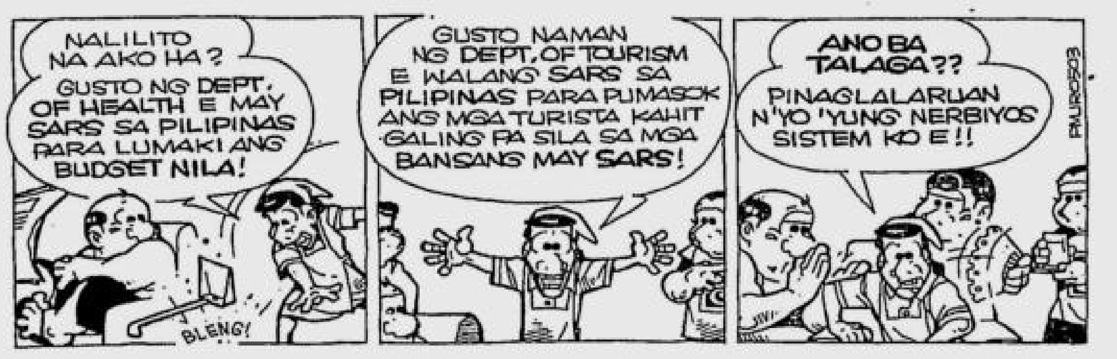
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PARA SIGURADO...'WAG MUNA KAYONG UMUWI DITO SA PINAS
PARA MAKAIWAS SA SARS?
HINDI
PARA MAKAIWAS SA TSISMIS NA MAY SARS KAYO!

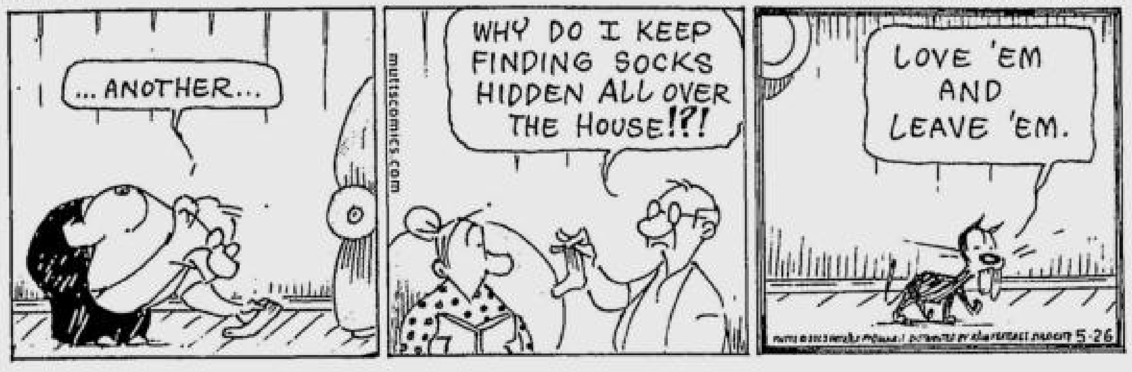
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NALILITO NA AKO HA?
GUSTO NG DEPT. OF HEALTH E MAY SARS SA PILIPINAS PARA LUMAKI ANG BUDGET NILA!
BLENG!
GUSTO NAMAN NG DEPT. OF TOURISM E WALANG SARS SA PILIPINAS PARA PUMASOK ANG MGA TURISTA KAHIT GALING PA SILA SA MGA BANSANG MAY SARS!
ANO BA TALAGA??
PINAGLALARUAN N'YO 'YUNG NERBIYOS SISTEM KO E!!

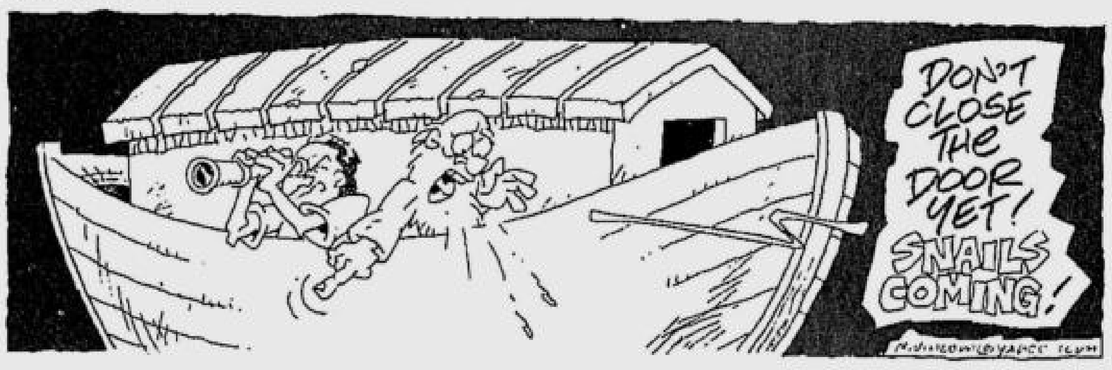
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


...ANOTHER...
muttscomics.com
WHY DO I KEEP FINDING SOCKS HIDDEN ALL OVER THE HOUSE!?!
LOVE 'EM AND LEAVE 'EM.

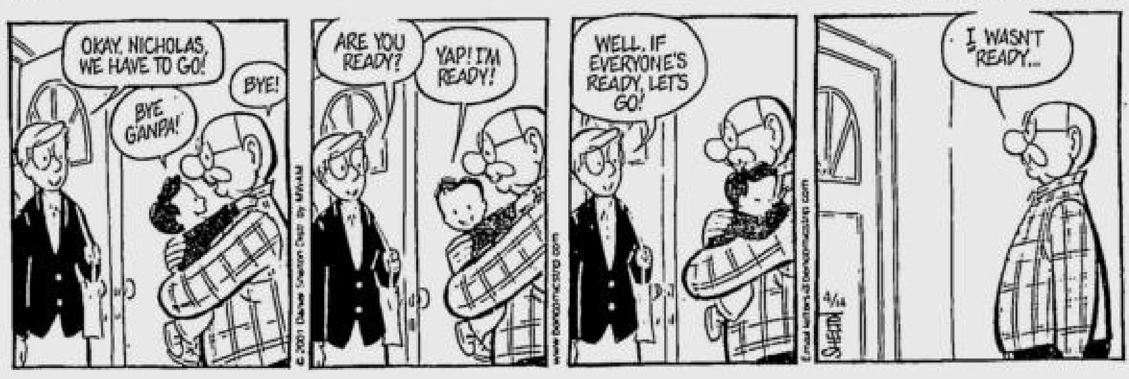
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DON'T CLOSE THE DOOR YET! SNAILS COMING!

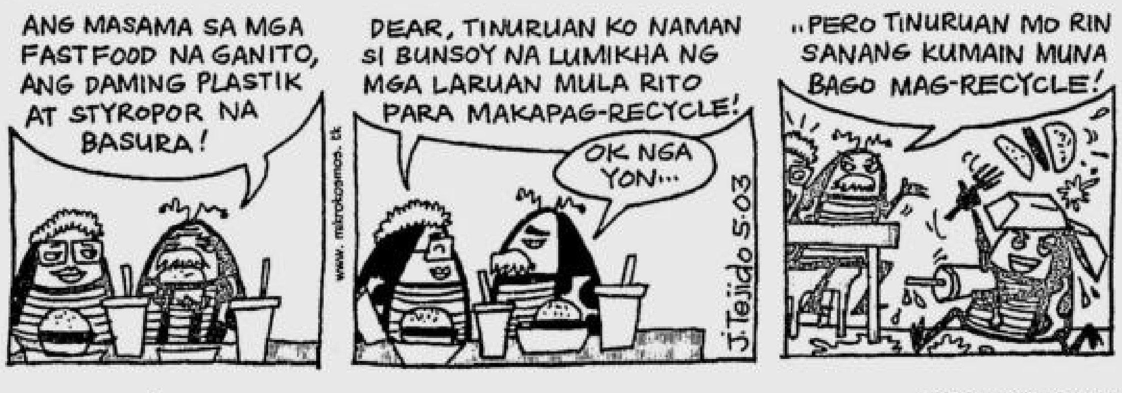
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


OKAY, NICHOLAS, WE HAVE TO GO!
BYE GANPA!
BYE!
ARE YOU READY?
YAP! I'M READY!
WELL, IF EVERYONE'S READY, LET'S GO!
I WASN'T READY...

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG MASAMA SA MGA FASTFOOD NA GANITO, ANG DAMING PLASTIK AT STYROPOR NA BASURA!
DEAR, TINURUAN KO NAMAN SI BUNSOY NA LUMIKHA NG MGA LARUAN MULA RITO PARA MAKAPAG-RECYCLE!
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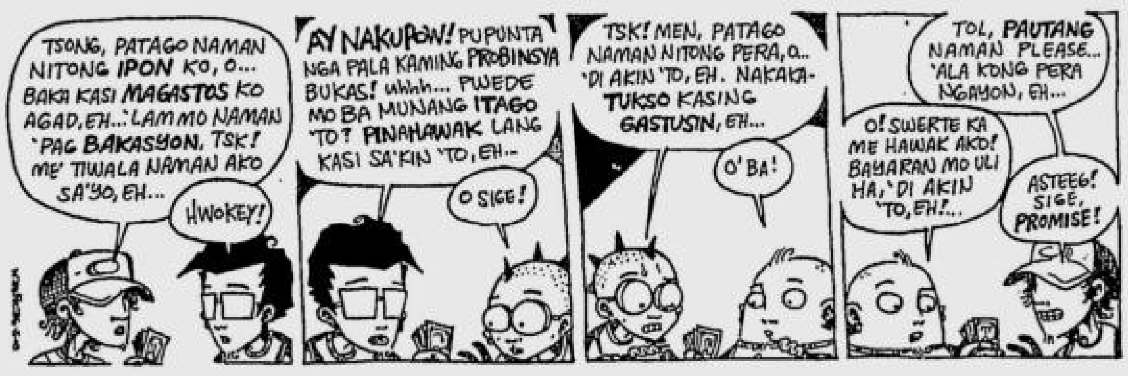
..PERO TINURUAN MO RIN SANANG KUMAIN MUNA BAGO MAG-RECYCLE!

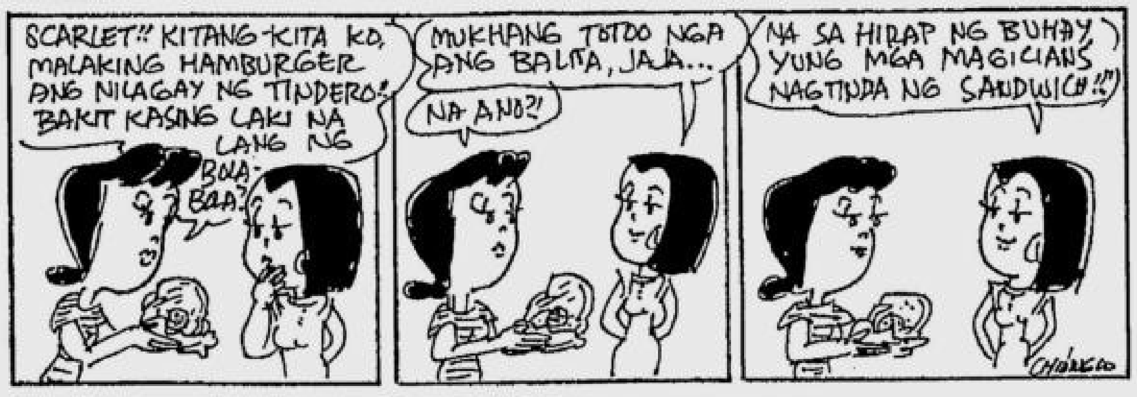
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSONG, PATAGO NAMAN NITONG IPON KO, O... BAKA KASI MAGASTOS KO AGAD, EH...'LAM MO NAMAN 'PAG BAKASYON, TSK! ME' TIWALA NAMAN AKO SA'YO, EH...
HWOKEY!
AY NAKUPOW! PUPUNTA NGA PALA KAMING PROBINSYA BUKAS! uhhh... PWEDE MO BA MUNANG ITAGO 'TO? PINAHAWAK LANG KASI SA'KIN 'TO, EH...
O SIGE!
TSK! MEN, PATAGO NAMAN NITONG PERA, O... 'DI AKIN 'TO, EH. NAKAKA-TUKSO KASING GASTUSIN, EH...
O'BA!
TOL, PAUTANG NAMAN PLEASE... 'ALA KONG PERA NGAYON, EH...
O! SWERTE KA ME HAWAK AKO! BAYARAN MO ULI HA, 'DI AKIN 'TO, EH!...
ASTEEG! SIGE, PROMISE!

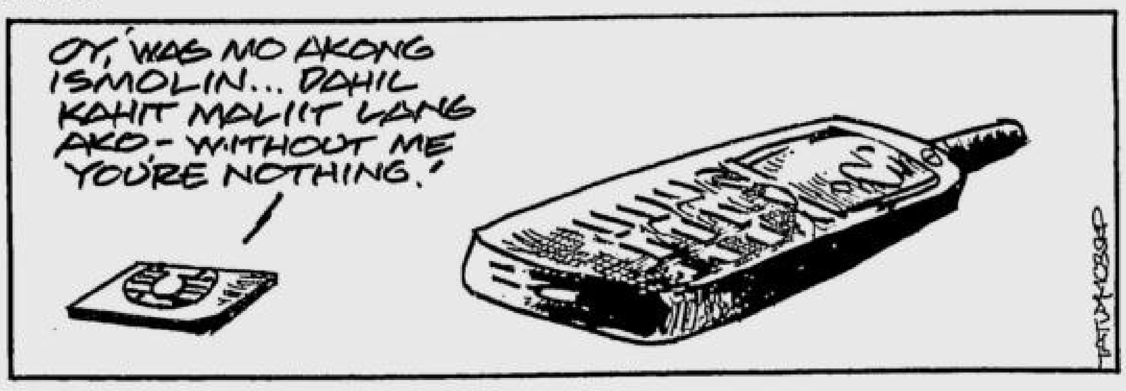
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SCARLET!! KITANG-KITA KO, MALAKING HAMBURGER ANG NILAGAY NG TINDERO! BAKIT KASING LAKI NA LANG NG
BOLA-BOLA?
MUKHANG TOTOO NGA ANG BALITA, JAJA...
NA ANO?!
NA SA HIRAP NG BUHAY YUNG MGA MAGICIANS NAGTINDA NG SANDWICH!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, 'WAG MO AKONG ISMOLIN... DAHIL KAHIT MALIIT LANG AKO - WITHOUT ME YOU'RE NOTHING.'

EDUCATION REVOLUTION

Program opens new learning avenues for teachers

By Butch Hernandez
Contributor

TEACHERS are vital to nation-building because they carry the great responsibility of properly educating young minds, FWWPP trustee Dr. Jose V. Abueva told participants in the Education Revolution Mentoring the Mentors Training Program at Raymen Beach Resort, Alubihod, Nueva Valencia, Guimaras Island.

Speaking before school administrators, principals and master teachers from 60 public schools in Iloilo City, Abueva said Mentoring the Mentors was an enabling activity because it provided the teacher new learning avenues.

The former president of the University of the Philippines system was the keynote speaker in the training session participated in by public schools from Iloilo's Districts I, III and IV held May 19-23.

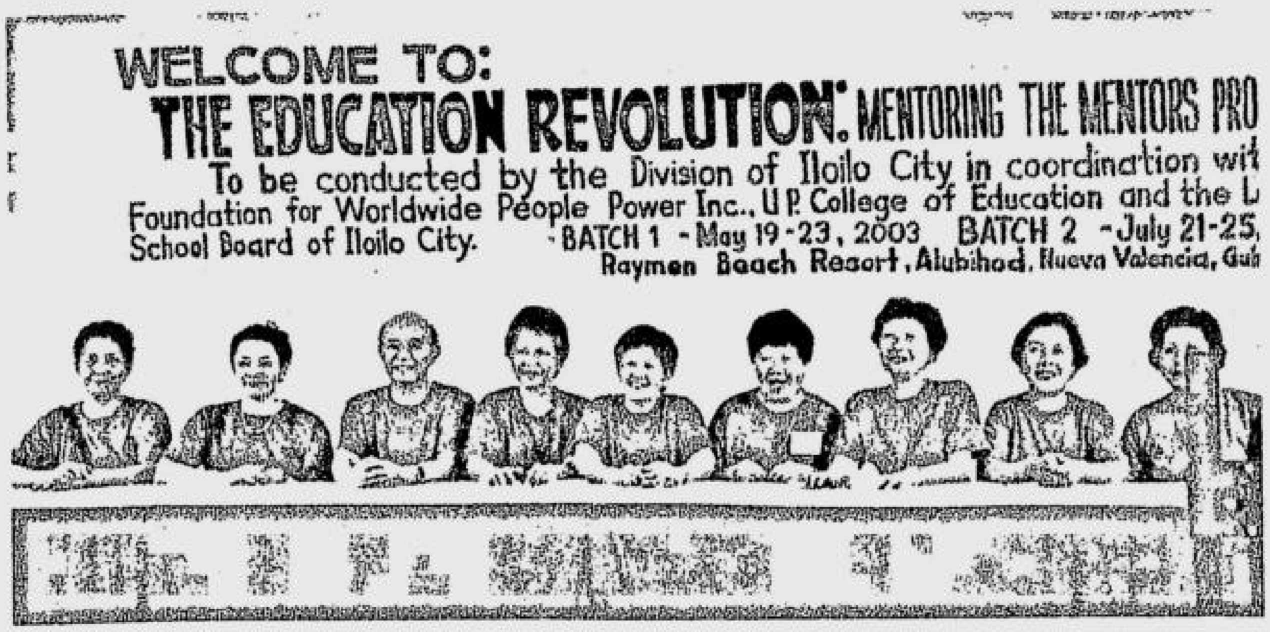
Participants from Districts II, V, VI, and VII will undergo training July 21-25.

Iloilo City Schools Division superintendent Ida B. Endonila spearheaded the implementation of the Mentoring the Mentors program for the city's elementary public schools teachers. She noted that "the comprehensive training program aims to empower teachers as agents of change by developing their mentoring skills and training them on the concept of Education for Social Transformation."

Abueva was very pleased that the participants—from the Department of Education supervisors to school administrators and teachers—were very progressive, receptive to the training concepts and very serious about the training activity as a whole.

"But they also know how to have fun," Abueva said.

THE TRAINING sessions were not "all work and no play."


WELCOME TO:
THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION: MENTORING THE MENTORS PRO
To be conducted by the Division of Iloilo City in coordination wit
Foundation for Worldwide People Power Inc., U.P. College of Education and the L
School Board of Iloilo City.
BATCH 1 - May 19-23, 2003 BATCH 2 - July 21-25,
Raymen Beach Resort, Alubihod, Nueva Valencia, Gui

DR. ABUEVA with the FWWPP Mentoring the Mentors program group and officials of the Dep Ed Division of Iloilo City.

Assumptionistas in EdRev

Not many people know this, but every summer since 1989, students of Assumption College in San Lorenzo have volunteered to go to far-flung barangays for days to learn what "education for social transformation" really means.

The socially-aware Assumptionistas are part of the Integrated Summer Study Program (ISSP), based on the need "for knowledge to serve a purpose, the more secular, the better. It must be one that is based on and pulled from existing realities."

Sr. Mary Gertrude Borres, Assumption College dean, said the ISSP gave students the unique opportunity to apply what they learned to social realities in disadvantaged areas.

In her send-off message to this year's volunteers, Sr. Gertrude said "the ISSP is only for you students who are willing to take the risk and spend your summer with your teachers in places where you can serve the people."

Life-changing experience

Chat Orense, facilitator of a group of psychology majors who went to Barangay Sta. Cruz in San Fernando, Camarines Sur, recalled how the girls quickly adjusted to extremely simple surroundings, particularly when they gave art lessons and regaled the pupils of the Sta. Cruz Elementary School with stories during a story-telling sessions.

Chat herself was an ISSP volunteer during her college days at Assumption. "Initially, some students join the ISSP simply because (they can skip) regular classes. But all this changes when they start interacting with their host communities," Chat said.

Ardy Batoy shepherded her Communications students in Sitio Tanglaw, Barangay Sala, Cabuyao, Laguna. Ardy teaches Communication Development. She said a couple of the girls were overcome with emotion after experiencing what it was like to serve other people.

Ardy's group visited the Sala Elementary School and they saw the substandard facilities. The students also met and talked to barangay chair Amelito Alimagno and several out-of-school youth as part of their community mapping activities in preparation for a three-year community development program.

One of Ardy's students, Justine Borres, said she was touched by the kindness of the people who, despite their problems "were still giving us food, thinking of us."

In Bontoc, Mt. Province, Professor Ben dela Cruz and Adelle Ceradoy from the Center for Social Concern facilitated the immersion of Accounting students in the Sta. Rita parish where they conducted computer tutorial services. Dela Cruz said his students saw how lucky they were after experiencing community life in the poblacion.

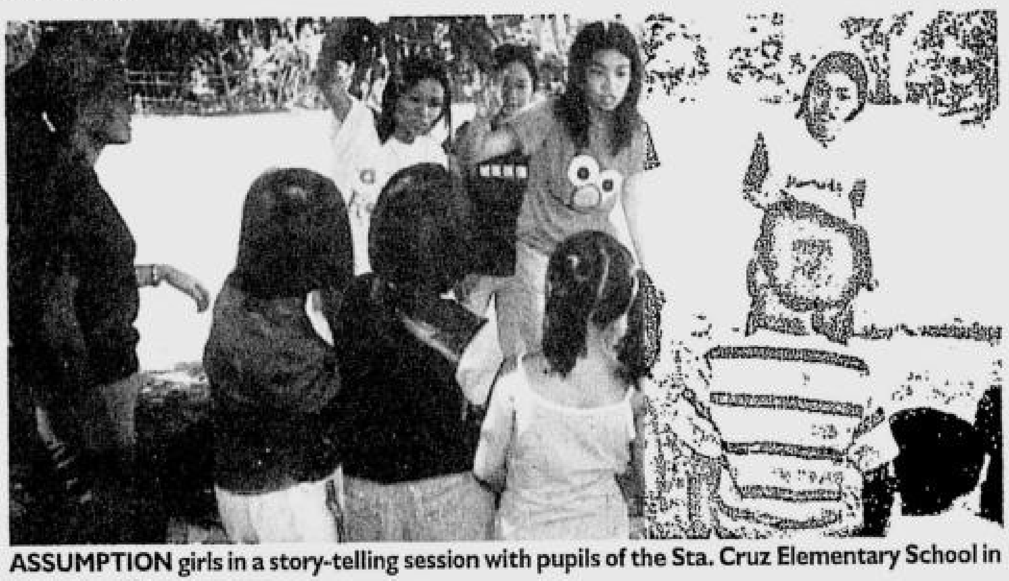
The author is the executive director of FWWPP.

Mentoring the Mentors aims to empower teachers as agents of change

PSYCHOLOGY students visit Barangay Sta. Cruz, Municipality of San Fernando, Camarines Sur.

THE EDUCATION REVOL
MENTORING T

FWWPP program director Chinit Rufino gamely joins the fun



ASSUMPTION girls in a story-telling session with pupils of the Sta. Cruz Elementary School in Camarines Sur.

ASSUMPTION College students with their foster mother Lola Belen Lorenzo (extreme left) and Ardy Araneta-Batoy (in glasses) in Barangay Sala, Cauyao, Laguna

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FEU marks 75th year with alumni awards

THE MAKATI Shangri-La will be the setting of the 75th founding anniversary alumni awards ceremonies of the Far Eastern University on May 30 at 7 p.m.

The 75 diamond jubilee most outstanding alumni will attend, including the 50 awardees who had been honored at appropriate ceremonies last Jan. 30 and March 1. The last 25 outstanding alumni, who will receive their awards that evening, will join them.

A dinner at 8 p.m. will follow the awarding ceremonies. Highlight of the evening will be the rigodon de honor at 9 p.m. to be performed by members of the FEU Board of Regents and university officials led by Dr. Lourdes Reyes-Montinola, chairman and Lydia B. Echauz, president.

Also leading the dance are trustee Angelina P. Jose, trustee Gianna R. Montinola, and vice-president for academic affairs Lydia A. Palaypay.

Ballroom dancing will cap the evening affair starting at 9:30 p.m. Call 736-48-97.

CONGRATULATI S!
National Book St
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DESIGN
WINNERS
SICOM

MANGA CHARACTER DESIGN CONTEST WINNER. National Book Store, in cooperation with PSICOM Publishing, Faber Castell and Dong-A, recently presented one of the winners of its Manga Character Design contest. Viktoria Matibag, a sixth grader at the Southville International School, was the grand prize winner in the contest's 9-12 age category (the other qualifying categories were for ages 13-17 and ages 18 and above). Matibag is a descendant of National Artist Vicente Manansala. She has been drawing since she was four years old, and gets inspiration from her favorite Japanese comic books and cartoons. She is shown in photo with PSICOM Operations Manager Jennifer Gabriel and Crown Supply representative Jane Ibarle. Manga is a type of Japanese-inspired drawing a la anime. Drawings in the contest were judged according to originality, creativity, cleanliness and likeness to Manga.

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Dark, compelling stories

From page G1

REVIEW

The title is a pun on the word for age 19 (disinueve). And we learn from one of the stories that for dirty old men (DOMs), a girl who is 19 or even younger, is no longer considered young, and is, in fact, "over the hill."

The imagery is apt because most of Aquino Sarmiento's protagonists are young but disillusioned and toughened by life's experiences. At a tender age they are already, in a way, "over the hill."

The vision of the author is bleak without being depressing, almost film noir, tough and sardonic. The impression of the reader is that here is a writer who has taken a good, hard look at life and does not flinch from it. If she offers her main characters any hope, it is a slim one. The light at the end of the tunnel is dim.

The first story, "Good Intentions 101:SY '72-'73," like the novel and film "Dekada '70," zeroes in on the effect of martial law on a middle-class family. Jennifer Misa, 14, is a high school student in a convent school (St. Claire's). Her Big Brother is an Atenean who disappears a few months after the imposition of martial law in 1972.

When he returns, while Jennifer and her group teach religion and English to underprivileged children who live in the cemetery, Big Brother is "a lot thinner, darker and (he) seemed sadder..." He tells his younger sister horror stories, but laughs at her for believing him. An enigma here.

The theme is the gap between the social classes, and the difficulty of changing the system through a middle-class type of do-gooding. The "good intentions" of the title may well signify the road to hell.

"When Ben Was Ben" is disturbing, harrowing even. Ironically, everyone here has a bright nickname. The father is Pooper, the mother Moomah, and so on. The eldest child, Ben, is named after a movie mouse.

The bright nicknames mask the dark, domestic goings-on. Moomah's flair for drama provokes a reaction from Pooper, who is dysfunctional, jobless and a beer-guzzler, until the family's history of "violence and alcoholism" begins to tell on Ben when he reaches school age.

Fallen mother

In "The Gizzard Boy," the author adopts a mock-ironic tone to avoid sentimentality. This is about a "fallen mother" and her "misbegotten, fatherless son" ironically named Hero.

Nanay is a former beauty queen who has fallen on hard times, abandoned by her heel of a lover. A real martyr, she does not know how to assert her rights. Her son, often the butt of jokes at school, struggles to rise above their miserable existence. But there is an indication that he may turn to a life of petty crime in the near future.

The theme of the outsider, the misfit, recurs in "The Frog Princess," a 15-page story which covers a lot of ground, from kindergarten to a class reunion decades later.

The school is again St. Claire's, and the student are portrayed as little bitches, and the nuns and teachers as insensitive. Protagonists Loretta, like Hero an object of ridicule, mercifully has a doggedness, some kind of inner strength that makes her a survivor in life.

In "Meditations of a Piss Artist," the scene shifts to UP-Diliman, specifically the College of Fine Arts, a story the author is qualified to write as she is a Painting major from that university.

Jojo is a sassy student who exudes sex and turns on some of his professors (women as well as gays) and classmates. A real "chick boy," he can have any girl for the asking, except the classy, pristine classmate he has the hots for.

In "When They Were Cool," the author using the first-person point of view for the first time. The narrator is a young girl seething with righteous indignation over her Dad's torrid affair with a 23-year-old sexpot. And because she is a fighter, she seizes the bull by the horns, actually, she seizes the navel ring of her father's mistress.

Trina ("Fugitive from a Chain Gang"), a 19-year-old single mother, neurotic and "*praning*," is a fighter, too. She fights to keep her man. But in this case, sadly, the fighter will lose.

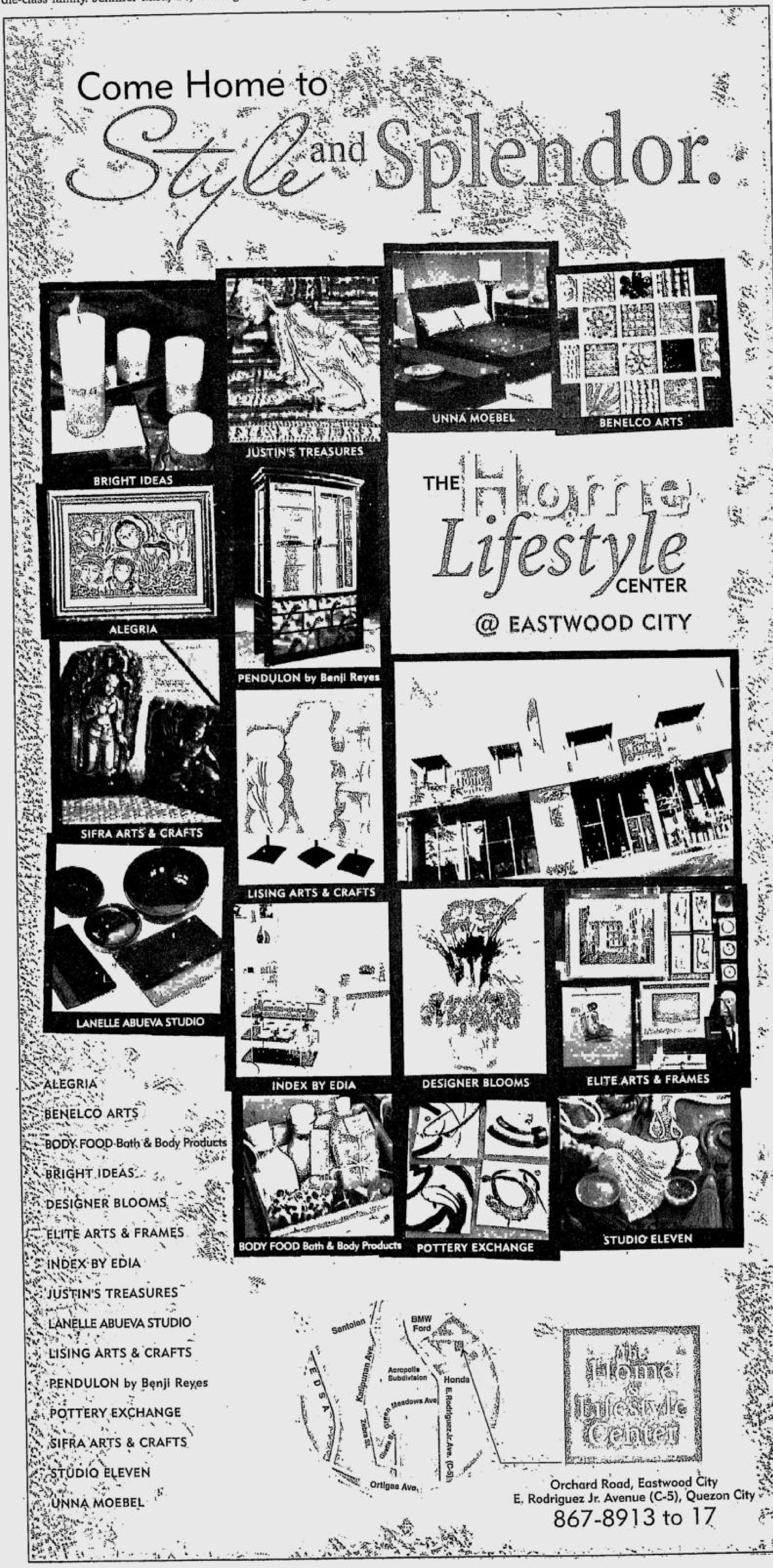
In "Zechariah in the Gloaming," the setting is the corporate jungle, with Zechariah clawing his way up. But he is not what he seems ("nothing is what it seems," as the character of Al Pacino declared in the movie "The Recruit"); and Zechariah, despite a mystical experience, ends up a victim, like many of Aquino Sarmiento's characters.

"Raptures" probes the fevered, visionary mind of Esther Pacheco, 24, a Marianista millenarian who believes that the End Times are coming, and that the sign of the devil (666) can be gleaned in the inverted logo of the Philippine Centennial. She receives a shock of a different sort.

"La Deconstruction de la Mujer de Malolos" is black comedy, a wicked satire inspired by Rizal's famous Letter to the Women of Malolos. But it's too short; and it should have been the opening salvo of the collection, and not its concluding story.

A late bloomer as far as fiction is concerned, Aquino Sarmiento writes with confidence and seeming ease. Her stories are well-crafted, compelling and often brilliant. With this debut collection, she emerges as a leading short-story writer of her generation.

> With this debut collection, Menchu Aquino Sarmiento emerges as a leading short-story writer of her generation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Pens for Generation Y

LEONE pens have become popular among young people because they write smoothly, are equipped with gel ink, have trendy colors and stylish designs and are refillable. There are choices available for everyone.

The Leone Click Gel Pen is a retractable gel ballpoint pen that has a transparent barrel with rubber grip—good for dashing off notes in class or on your diary.

Gel Tech Pens and Gel-Line Pens are great for writing school reports. Gel Tech Pens are needlepoint pens with a cap and an elegant silver clip, while Gel-Line Pens are no-nonsense ballpoint pens.

Leone Sign Ball Pens are designed for the trendy crowd. These transparent retractable pens with rubber grip come in a variety of hip, eye-catching colors to match your mood, nail polish, bag or cell phone.

Leone Gel Pens are locally distributed by Star Paper Corporation and are available in National Bookstore outlets, SM Department Stores, Robinsons Department Stores, NBS Book Express, Goodwill Bookstore, Pandayan Bookshop, Office Warehouse, Lopues, Bohol Quality, Bazaar Mariano Lim, Laser Marketing, Lucky Educational Supply, Master Square, City Supermarkets, Fit Mart (Marbel, Tacurong, General Santos), Marbel Ace Commercial and other leading bookstores nationwide.

My Special Valentine offers new romantic titles

ENJOY your summer reading with My Special Valentine (MSV) pocket romances.

The new titles include "If Tomorrow Never Comes," "The Man I Love," "Dahil sa Pag-ibig," "For Once in My Life," "The Second Time Around," "Save Your Heart For Me," "Kahit sa Panaginip Lang," "Ilang Ulit Kang Mamahalin," "Finding Mr. Right," "Baby, Come Back," "Ikaw Lang at Ako" and "Kung Lilimutin Mo Siya."

Bookware Publishing Corporation, publisher of MSV, has announced that old coupons from its past promo are acceptable as official entries to the ongoing Nokia 7650 Raffle Promo.

Recent monthly winner is Greta Diadula of Sampaloc, Manila, who won a Nokia 3310 model. Call Dottie Pineda at 631-8893 to 94.